SCHOOL LEADER PREPARATION IN THE NAZARENE UNIVERSITY SYSTEM: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF THE ROLE OF EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

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AUTHORIZATION TO SUBMIT

DISSERTATION

This dissertation of Andrée Scown, submitted for the degree of Doctor of Education with a major in Educational Leadership and titled "School Leader Preparation in the Nazarene University System: A Qualitative Study of the Role of Emotional Intelligence" has been reviewed in final form. Permission, as indicated by the signatures and dates given below, is now granted to submit final copies.

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DEDICATION

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ABSTRACT

The overall intent of the study was to understand the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation programs in the Nazarene university system. A qualitative exploration of the understanding and presence of emotional intelligence (EI) theory and associated concepts in two Nazarene university principal preparation programs was conducted along with an investigation of the need, hindrances, and solutions to including such topics in the universities' programs. Two educational leadership program directors from each university acted as participants by responding to semi structured interview questions about the topics.

The results revealed a perceived need for the inclusion of EI theory and associated concepts in the universities' principal preparation programs. Hindrances and possible solutions for including EI in the curriculum resulted in clear guidelines for incorporating the topics in the universities' courses of study. Implications for application of the results to other universities were discussed as well as the potential for development and implementation of training in EI for a broader set of educational leaders, including preservice and existing principals, teachers, education specialists, various levels of school leaders, and community partners in leadership roles affecting schools. Recommendations were made for further research extending the study of EI theory and associated concepts into universities outside the Nazarene university system as well as employing a quantitative approach to further investigate the ten themes which emerged regarding the relationship between EI and principal leadership. A comparison study using the same methods to explore the topic of servant leadership was also suggested.

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Chapter I

Introduction

Since its humble beginnings in Colonial America, public education has been evolving. Influenced largely by social norms, scientific and technological advancements, and associated economic conditions (DeRoberto, 2011), schools have become a fundamental structure of American culture (Rury, 2009). Despite the importance of schools as strongly rooted social institutions, rapid changes in modern society have brought with them an onslaught of government initiatives aimed at changing the fabric of schools in America (Fullan, 1993; Rury, 2009).

In preparation for the Leadership Institute for Principals, The College Board (2006) identified the highly stressful nature of the role of today's principals, noting few are well prepared to meet the demands of a high pressure position while juggling a variety of duties. Leading successfully in this new era requires the school administrator to simultaneously act as a sociologist, an inspiring role model, and an effective business manager (Reel, 2006), all the while recognizing the importance of strong relationships and effective communication as critical entry points (Boyatzis, Smith, & Blaine, 2006; Czech & Forward, 2010; Goleman, 2011; Gordon, 2001; Hebert, 2011; McKee, Boyatzis, & Johnston, 2008; Newberg & Waldman, 2012).

Of specific importance are the implications for developing topics of study for educational leadership programs in higher education institutions and in-service trainings for existing administrators working in schools. Current programs are focused on the practical and theoretical approaches to change management, while lacking opportunities to gain an understanding of the influential role emotion plays in transformational leadership and the building of trusting relationships in the school setting (Church, 2009; The College Board, 2006; Hebert, 2011;

Yamamoto, 2010). In recent years, university programs in business leadership and health care have implemented such curriculum into their coursework, which acknowledges the importance of providing instruction in a more emotionally intelligent, people-centered approach to leadership (Fullan, 2008). If supported through research such as this study, instruction in the relation-based, social-emotional aspects of leadership could be a useful addition to appropriate courses in educational leadership programs in universities and in-service training for administrators in the field (Hebert, 2011; Mills, 2009; Sanders & Johnson, 2009; Stone, Parker, & Wood, 2005).

Statement of the Problem

Each school setting is unique with varying conditions and norms, but they share one common denominator—people. Regardless of the type of setting, the nuances of the staff, or the variations in student demographics, school leaders are required to work with people to conduct the business of schooling, including the need to bring about changes toward improvement. The influence of the school leader's effectiveness has been significantly correlated to student achievement (Marzano, Waters, & McNulty, 2005), and the current high-stakes environment in education forces leaders to focus primarily on the management and oversight of resources and the implementation of new programs (Church, 2009; Hebert, 2011). In response to the need for training in the pragmatics of school leadership, university preparation programs provide specific instruction in change management and organizational leadership in order to help prepare new administrators to successfully navigate the ongoing wave of requirements and reform initiatives being mandated by the federal government and states (Fullan, 2012; Hebert, 2011; Mills, 2009). The focus on the practical aspects of school leadership, including finance, legal issues, hiring practices, accountability, standards, student achievement, teacher evaluation, and instructional

improvement, leave little room in administrator preparation programs for instruction in the important social and emotional aspects of school leadership (Church, 2009; Fullan, 2012).

Studies, prompted by the rising awareness of the relationship between educational leaders with strong social-emotional skills and leadership effectiveness (Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Hebert, 2011; Ulrich & Woodson, 2011) have examined the need for instruction in the interpersonal and intrapersonal aspects of school leadership (Mills, 2009; Sanders & Johnson, 2009; Stone et al., 2005). The emotional intelligence (EI) theory, a concept popularized by Goleman (2011) and applied widely in the corporate setting, was pinpointed as the conceptual lens for exploring this need. Several studies surfaced in the review of the literature that indicate the value of integrating emotional intelligence curriculum into principal preparation programs of study (Church, 2009; Sanders & Johnson, 2009; Stone et al., 2005). In a meta-analysis of the relationship between emotional intelligence and effective leadership, Mills (2009) concluded that the relationship between emotional intelligence and leadership effectiveness warrants a need for changes in preparation programs for educational leaders. Mills justified his recommendation for including training in emotional intelligence and associated skills in educational leadership programs stating,

> Developing skills associated with emotional intelligence, no longer a “soft skill,” and implementing a leadership style in practice that is reflective of emotional intelligence may support greater levels of effectiveness. Given the demanding nature of educational leadership in the current climate of accountability and standards, continued calls for reform, strenuous recruitment, and retention efforts for highly qualified staff, and an ever changing landscape of reform and demographics, educational leaders may be hard pressed to ignore this finding. (2009, p. 29)

The identified need for training in emotional intelligence for school leaders provided the impetus for this study, which sought to explore the perceptions of university program directors regarding the inclusion of this type of training in preparation programs for educational leaders. In order to gain a deeper understanding of the topic, a qualitative research design was employed. Specifically, the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation programs in the Nazarene university system in the United States was studied.

Background to the Study

The beginning of a government-driven educational change movement in the United States can be pinpointed to the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 (U.S. Department of Education, n.d.). On the heels of influential civil rights and antipoverty legislation, the ESEA opened the door to federal involvement in schools (Rury, 2009), a trend that has only continued as educational reform has unfolded. The 2001 reauthorization of the ESEA resulted in the adoption of the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act, which set out to ensure an equitable, high-level educational opportunity for every student, based on more rigorous academic standards across the nation. A focus on improvement as measured by state achievement tests created a push for data-driven instruction and standards-based curriculum development creating a high-stakes environment in schools (Educational Policy Institute, 2005). Scholars have described NCLB as a top–down government attempt to implement standards-based reform to bring American public schools up to speed with higher performing schools worldwide (Fullan, 2008; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Rury, 2009). In the wake of the NCLB legislation, a ripple effect of school improvement measures and accountability systems has cropped up across the nation that puts teachers, school leaders, and government policy makers in a challenging position. Educational change gurus Hargreaves and Fullan addressed this dilemma

in their introduction to *Change Wars* (Barber et al., 2009), a book providing insight from a variety of school reform specialists on the challenges and opportunities educators face in the twenty-first century. Barber et al. (2009) stated, "The problem is even greater in today's era of educational change where reforms proliferate, initiatives abound, legal responsibilities are constantly expanding, and both teachers and leaders complain constantly of overload" (p. 3).

As the school leaders of the twenty-first century step forward to tackle the challenges brought about by the rapidly and continually changing complexities of school reform (Fullan, 1993; Hargreaves & Shirley, 2009; Rury, 2009), it will be critical for them to respond with intelligence, awareness, and a keen sensitivity to the people they lead (Goleman, 2011; Satpathy & Mohapatara, 2012). Moore (2009) suggested the transformative role of the current-day principal is more challenging than ever. In order to successfully navigate these new challenges, school leaders must employ an approach that allows them to guide instructional practice toward improved student achievement, while maintaining a healthy school environment built around positive relationships (Barbuto, 2007; The College Board, 2006; DeRoberto, 2011; Goleman, 2011; McKee et al., 2008; Price, 2012; Undung & DeGuzman, 2009).

The ability to build and manage positive relationships is central to effective change leadership (Cropper, 2005; Fullan, 2012; Price, 2012; Ulrich & Woodson, 2011), topping Fullan's list of priorities for the change-savvy leader in his recent book *The Moral Imperative Realized* (2012). Fullan went on to list the building of trusting relationships as the first of three conditions necessary for successful, assertive change leadership. Echoed by other researchers, cultivating relationships based on trust is essential work for school leaders as they guide followers through the twisted maze of school reform, while maintaining a sense of meaning and motivation in the organization (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schnieder, 2003; Fullan,

2012; Newberg & Waldman, 2012). The ability to develop trusting relationships can be attributed in part to an individual's level of emotional intelligence (Benjamin, Gulliya, & Crispo, 2012; Brackett, 2013; Goleman, 2011; Moore, 2009; Tang, Yin, & Nelson, 2010).

Emotional intelligence, as defined by Mayer, Roberts, and Barsade (2008), "involves the ability to carry out accurate reasoning about emotions and the ability to use emotions and emotional knowledge to enhance thought" (p. 507). Originally developed as a psychological theory by Salovey and Mayer (Salovey & Grewal, 2005), three major theories of emotional intelligence have risen to the surface as competing models in the literature (Benjamin et al., 2012; Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Sternberg, 2000): (a) Bar-On's trait model of EI; (b) Goleman's EI model of acquired skills and competencies; and (c) Mayer and Salovey's intellectual ability model (Benjamin et al., 2012). Although distinct in conceptual approach, each shares some common features. One such feature is the acknowledgment of improved interpersonal relationships as an outcome of practicing skills requiring emotional intelligence (Goleman, 2011; Mayer et al., 2008; Sternberg, 2000).

The theories of emotional intelligence have received considerable attention in recent years as a part of the shift to a focus on the need for transformational leaders who are cognizant of and skilled in relationship building (Benjamin et al., 2012; Brown & Moshavi, 2005). Goleman's model is discussed in this study because of its applicability to the organizational context of schools and the generalization to the role of school leaders. Goleman (2011) identified four competencies required of emotionally intelligent leaders: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management. These four areas create the framework for his EI theory, which has been applied widely in the corporate world based on the need to develop leaders who lead through and with people to motivate and inspire their best work (Benjamin et

al., 2012; Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Goleman, 2011). Like corporate leaders, educational leaders are called to inspire the best in their teachers and to motivate them toward improvement and optimal performance as part of the high-stakes educational environment in which they exist (Rury, 2009). This requires leaders, including school principals, through competency in self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management, to resonate with their employees in a way that their guidance will be received and put into action (McKee et al., 2008). Leader competence in the four domains of emotional intelligence identified by Goleman can be enhanced through the development of interpersonal communication skills (Hebert, 2011). Communication is the pathway through which the emotionally intelligent leader operates (Hebert, 2011; Tang et al., 2010). Several brain-based, social-emotional skills can be accessed to help leaders improve their ability to communicate effectively.

Recent studies in emotions, human relationships, and related brain functions, show communication is enhanced by maintaining a state of mindful awareness while engaged in communication (Olson & Brown, 2012; Thornton, 2012; Waldman; 2010). Practicing mindfulness, or “the simple act of drawing distinctions” (Langer, 2000, p. 220), has been linked to greater social connectivity, compassion, empathy, and positive emotions (Hanson, 2012; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Seppala, 2013; Simon-Thomas, 2013; Tipsord, 2009). For the school leader, this translates into acting and responding to those under one’s charge more coherently and with more understanding, helping staff to feel supported, thereby creating a positive school community (Olsen & Brown, 2012).

A more compassionate response is one benefit of practicing mindfulness, and when enhanced through specific intentions to develop a compassionate perspective, leaders can strengthen relationships and improve the work climate (Cropper, 2009; McKee et al., 2008).

Defined by Hanson (2012) as “the recognition of another person’s suffering combined with a wish to ease that suffering,” compassion brings the human element to the leader’s arena. According to Cropper (2009), this contradicts the popular stereotype of the leader who exhibits qualities equated with power; rational, rather than emotional thinking; and a focus on problems, not people. When considered in terms of a benevolent attitude, compassion finds a place in the leaders’ repertoire of relationship skills by putting them in the frame of mind to help others (McKee et al., 2008). The problem may be the same, but the way it is perceived by the leader has profound ramifications on the way it is handled and the resulting ripple effect of the response. Addressed in a talk by Zakrzewski (2013), education director at U.C. Berkeley’s Greater Good Science Center, simply approaching someone with a compassionate attitude of “what happened to you?” rather than “what’s wrong with you?” provides the leader with a more relationship-centered and useful perspective for approaching people and issues in the organization.

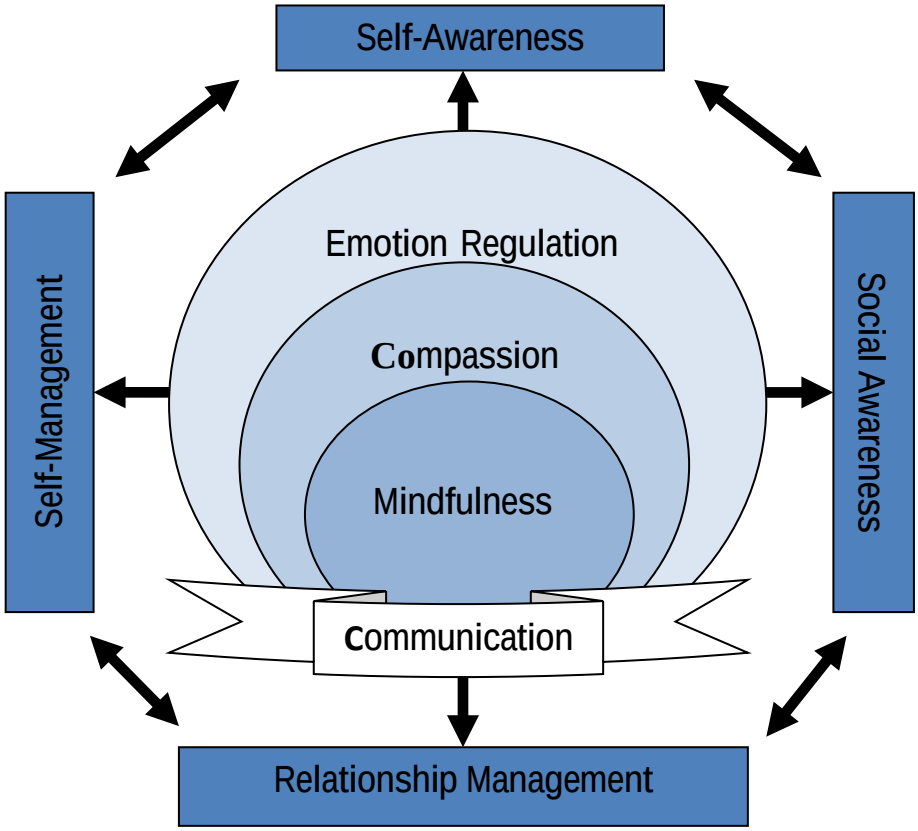
Mindfulness and compassion are clearly linked to improved interpersonal relations, but another component essential to emotionally intelligent leadership is presented to complete the theoretical framework of this study. The ability to manage one’s emotions is inextricably related to maintaining a mindful presence and compassionate perspective when interacting and communicating with people (Eckman, 2013; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Gordon, 2001; Waldman, 2010). Emotion regulation has been studied recently through the lens of affective neuroscience, which points to the plasticity of the human brain as the key to developing a more balanced emotional state (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012, 2013). A balanced emotional state allows leaders to resonate with people in a way that makes them approachable as a person, consistent in their responses, and emotionally available to help others (Eckman, 2013; Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008).

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study was built from the three main components that surfaced in the research surrounding the study of emotions, human relationships, and the brain. These three constructs–mindfulness (Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Langer, 2000; Kabat-Zinn, 2009), compassion (Hanson, 2012; Neff, 2013; Seppala, 2013) and emotion regulation (Brackett, 2013; Davidson & Begley, 2013; Eckman, 2013; Gross, 1999)–have been empirically linked to human social connectivity and the capacity to develop healthy relationships and associated positive interpersonal communication (Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Waldman, 2010).

Figure 1

Theoretical Framework – The Social and Emotional Skills of the Emotionally Intelligent Leader



Satpathy and Mohapatara (2012) noted the need for a new approach to communication in the workplace due to the social and technological changes in society. Borek (2003) maintained that in order for communication to be effective, people must feel they are heard and that their input matters. This requires the administrator to be skilled in communication, both in expressing messages and receiving them (Gordon, 2001). The way in which a leader communicates has been shown to have considerable impact on relationships between leaders and employees in the organization (Brown, 2012; Czech & Forward, 2010; Goleman, 2011; Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008), and effective communication has been identified as a precursor to individual and organizational success (The College Board, 2006; Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008; Newburg & Waldman, 2012). The ability of leaders to lead mindfully has been shown to enhance communication between leaders and followers (Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012; Marturano, 2010; Olson & Brown, 2012; Waldman, 2010). In addition, leaders who feel and express empathy and compassion are shown to have more success in establishing meaningful connections with employees (Newburg & Waldman, 2012; Yamamoto, 2010), thereby improving communication (Borek, 2003; DeRoberto, 2011; Goleman, 2011; Lilius et al., 2011; McKee et al., 2008). Finally, studies in affective neuroscience show a link between the regulation of emotions and the capacity for leaders to resonate with followers (Eckman, 2013; Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008). Emotion regulation is supported by mindfulness and a compassionate frame of mind (Brackett, 2013; Davidson & Begley, 2012; Eckman, 2013; Hanson, 2013) and is therefore included to complete the scope of the study. All three are included in the framework to illustrate that each plays a role in the leader's ability to lead effectively (Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008; Olson & Brown, 2012). Proposing that the combination of the three is more efficacious than each alone, the framework presents

mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation as separate, yet related, behavioral and emotional skills, which, when combined, will create the conditions for improved emotional intelligence for leaders by supporting the four competencies that make up Goleman's model. All factors are held together by communication, which is the vehicle through which all interpersonal interactions take place between leaders and followers.

Their complementary qualities are obvious when one examines the influence of one construct upon the other. For example, the ability to regulate one's emotions depends in part on an individual's skill to notice their emotions, while recognizing the emotions of others (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Eckman, 2013). The capacity to notice and recognize both inner and outer human emotions requires mindfulness or awareness of self and others (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Gunaratana, 2011; Tipsord, 2009). Viewed conversely, individuals are more likely to take a mindful approach to a situation if they are able to regulate their emotions, thereby allowing the time and space to practice mindful thinking (Cowan & McKenna, 2013). In turn, in order for individuals to feel and express compassion during interpersonal interactions, they must be both mindful enough to accurately read others and their needs and also be in control of their own emotions, allowing them to respond appropriately to the situation (Gordon, 2001; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Shafir, 2003). Communication hinges the concepts together by providing a pathway for interpersonal interactions between the leader and followers to take place. Clearly, each concept interacts with and affects the other, and it is through this lens that the researcher approached the study.

This study was designed to explore the role of emotional intelligence and associated social and emotional skills in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system. The objective of the study was to provide insights regarding the awareness of the concepts and

presence of curriculum providing instruction in emotional intelligence, as well as the perceived need for inclusion and any hindrances or solutions to incorporating such curriculum in the educational leadership programs of the participating universities.

The importance of providing training in the emotional aspects of school leadership can be traced back to the undeniable influence of the principal on improving instructional practice and student learning. Principals, who resonate with and emotionally support teachers as they assimilate new instructional practices into their curriculum to keep abreast of the changes brought about by school reform, find their teachers are more motivated and willing to engage in the process (The College Board, 2006; Fullan, 2008; McKee, 2008; Price, 2012;). The result is more effective instruction and better learning outcomes (DeRoberto, 2011; Church, 2009; Hebert, 2011). The leadership of the emotionally intelligent leader has a similar impact on students who are shown to perform better in schools led by effective principals (Hebert, 2011; Marzano et al., 2005; Noe, 2012).

The results of an extensive meta-analysis conducted by leading educational researchers show the substantial impact of school leaders on student achievement. In their book, *School Leadership That Works: From Research to Results,* authors Marzano, Waters, and McNulty (2005), shared the findings of their meta-analysis, which included 69 studies published between 1978 and 2001 of 2,802 K–12 schools in the United States and other countries with similar school structures. They found a significant, positive correlation between effective school leadership and student achievement. The study resulted in the identification of 21 leadership responsibilities and 66 behaviors or practices for fulfilling the responsibilities associated with effective leadership and student achievement.

Of the 21 responsibilities identified by Marzano et al. (2005), one third, or seven, can be directly linked to the emotional intelligence abilities, behaviors, and associated social and emotional skills explored in this study. If the identified responsibilities of (a) fostering culture, (b) being visible and accessible, (c) establishing communication, (d) engendering relationships, (e) inspiring optimization, (f) demonstrating flexibility, and (g) practicing situational awareness account for a third of a leader's potential for effectiveness, then certainly training to develop the behaviors or practices to fulfill these responsibilities should be provided. Due to the social and emotional underpinnings of these responsibilities, which can be classified under the domains of Goleman's EI theory, the investigation of the role of emotional intelligence in current principal preparation programs was justified.

Based on the rationale presented in the theoretical framework and the intent of the study to understand the role of emotional intelligence and related skills in the preparation of principals in the Nazarene university system, five exploratory questions were developed to frame the inquiry of this qualitative study.

Research Questions

1. Do the educational leadership courses currently offered in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system include the study of EI theory and related social and emotional skills of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation?
2. What is the level of understanding of the EI theory and its perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?

3. What is the level of understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation, and their perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?
4. Is there a perceived need to strengthen the inclusion of curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system?
5. What are the perceived hindrances and solutions to including curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system?

Description of Terms

The following empirically derived definitions will be used to guide discussion of the concepts explored in the study.

Active empathetic listening. The active and emotional involvement of a listener during a given interaction that is conscious on the part of the listener but is also perceived by the speaker (Bodie, 2011, p. 278).

Compassion. The presence of these three components: (a) empathy, or understanding the feelings of others; (b) caring, or "affiliative arousal" for the other person; and (c) willingness to act in response to the other person's feelings (Boyatzis et al., 2006, p. 12).

Compassion meditation (also referred to as loving-kindness meditation). Exercises oriented toward enhancing unconditional, positive emotional states of kindness and compassion (Hofmann, Grossman, & Hinton, 2011, p. 1126)

Emotional intelligence. The ability to perceive and express emotion, assimilate emotion in thought, understand and reason with emotion, and regulate emotion in the self and others (Sternberg, 2000, p. 396).

Emotion regulation. The ways individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience or express these emotions (Gross, 1999, p. 542).

Empathy. The ability to experience and relate to the thoughts, emotions, or experience of others (Gentry, Weber, & Sadri, 2007, p. 3).

Mindfulness. A flexible state of mind in which we are actively engaged in the present, noticing new things and sensitive to context (Langer, 2000, p. 220).

Mindfulness meditation. Nonjudgmental awareness of what is happening inside and around us in the present moment (Olson & Brown, 2012, p. 2).

Servant leadership. A style of leadership marked by character traits portray the leader as a servant to the organization with the ultimate purpose of helping others in the organization grow to their fullest potential (McCuddy & Cavin, 2008).

Self-awareness. Having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives (Goleman, 2011, p. 345).

Self-compassion. Being kind and understanding toward one's self in instances of pain or failure rather than being harshy self-critical; perceiving one's experiences as part of the larger human experience rather than seeing them as isolating; and holding painful thoughts and feelings in mindful awareness rather than overidentifying with them (Neff, 2003, p. 223).

Social connectedness. feeling of closeness to and belongingness with others in one's social environment (Seppala, 2009, p. 1).

Significance of the Study

Several areas can be identified which point to the potential significance and value of this study for educational research: (a) a lack of research exploring the presence of curriculum in principal preparation programs providing instruction in emotional intelligence and associated social and emotional skills; (b) the creation of a new entry point for educational research on emotional intelligence as it relates to school leaders; (c) the potential of developing emotional intelligence curriculum for educational leadership programs at the university level and in-service training for existing administrators; and (d) transferability of the findings to other university programs in educational leadership.

Of specific importance are the implications for developing topics of study for educational leadership programs in higher education institutions and in-service trainings for existing administrators. Current programs are focused on change management and theories of leadership while lacking opportunities for learning how to tap into one's inner resources to build and maintain trusting relationships in the school setting (Church, 2009; Hebert, 2011; Yamamoto, 2010). In recent years, university programs in business leadership and health care have implemented such curriculum into their coursework, which acknowledges the value of providing instruction in a more emotionally intelligent, people-centered approach to leadership (Fullan, 2008). If supported through research such as this study, instruction in relation-based leadership, grounded in emotional intelligence and based on a more mindful, compassionate, and emotionally balanced approach to interacting with people and addressing problems, would be a useful addition to appropriate courses in educational leadership programs in universities and in-service trainings for administrators in the field. The potential benefits could be experienced both in the Nazarene university system and beyond, including pre-service program revisions that

include the use of emotional intelligence in the preparation of school principals, and in terms of higher levels of practitioner performance in the K–12 educational setting.

A review of the literature indicates a variety of studies addressing skills associated with emotional intelligence in leaders, such as mindfulness (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Marturano, 2010; Tipsord, 2009; Van den Hurk et al., 2011), compassion (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Dodson-LaVelle, 2013; Lilius et al., 2011; Neff, 2003; Neff & Germer, 2012), emotion regulation (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Krueger et al., 2009; Mograbi, 2011; Nielsen & Kaszniak, 2006), and effective communication (Czech & Forward, 2010; Drollinger, Comer, & Warrington, 2006; Fenniman, 2010; Gordon, 2001; Newberg & Waldman, 2012). However, the majority of studies on emotional intelligence and associated social and emotional skills have been focused on the disciplines of social and affective neuroscience interpersonal psychology, mental health care, and the corporate business world (Fullan, 2012; Goleman, 2011; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Waldman, 2010). Several studies have addressed the effect of emotional intelligence as embodied and exhibited by school leaders (DeRoberto, 2011; Mills, 2009; Stone et al., 2005; Tang et al., 2010; Yamamoto, 2010), some of which recommend the inclusion of emotional intelligence in training for leaders. The number of studies located that specifically investigate the value of emotional intelligence curriculum in school leader preparation programs is very limited, resulting in the location and review of three such studies (Church, 2009; Hebert, 2011; Sanders & Johnson, 2009). All three studies found the inclusion of emotional intelligence curriculum in principal preparation programs to be beneficial to the successful work of school leaders, and a recommendation for further research was given. This establishes the worthiness and value of this study in contributing to the research on this topic, which is minimally represented in the current educational literature.

Delimitations

The study of the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation was limited to participants from two Nazarene universities having educational leadership programs in principal preparation. The study was limited to this scope in order to specifically examine the phenomena related to the topics of the study from institutions with similar philosophical and conceptual approaches. Universities outside the Nazarene system were not included in order to avoid data that may have interfered with the ability to discover the truth of the phenomenon as it was experienced and expressed by participants. In addition, the roles of the participants were intentionally identified, and the participants were chosen for the study based on their assumed expertise and background of experience in the topic of educational leadership. Within these parameters, the researcher sought to uncover and understand the essence of the phenomenon as it was expressed by the participants and any artifacts they provided (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Limitations

The uncontrolled limitations that were inherent to this study and may have contributed to bias were the existing values, beliefs, and personalities of the subjects who were selected to participate in the study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The values, beliefs, personality, and intellectual filter of the researcher must be considered as well as part of the limits of the study. In order to minimize this influence, the interview questions were scripted for the interviewer, and each interview session was audio recorded, followed by transcription from a third party who was hired by the researcher.

Overview of Research Methods

The study employed a qualitative, phenomenological approach to investigating the role of emotional intelligence in the principal preparation programs of two distinct universities in the

Nazarene university system. The perceptions of program directors from the universities regarding emotional intelligence and associated skills in relation to school leadership, along with uncovering any hindrances and solutions they perceive to including these topics in their program curriculum, was examined. An unearthing of current course offerings along with any hindrances or solutions to including this type of training in the university programs studied was carried out as well.

The purpose of interviewing pairs was to deepen the study by providing two perspectives from each university setting. Each participant in the phenomenological study was interviewed twice in keeping with effective qualitative data collection procedures.

Validation of the interview questions was carried out by piloting the questions with six educational leadership experts who held positions in the Nazarene university attended by the researcher. The questions were sent via e-mail to the directors or professors in the educational leadership program at the univeristy who were knowledgeable of curriculum related to leadership theory in education. Written feedback was received from five of the six professionals, who asked questions to clarify the purpose of the questions, gave recommendations for changes that would strengthen the validity of the data collection by ensuring the questions drew the intended types of responses from participants, and made general suggestions for strategies for conducting useful interviews and sound data collection. Revisions were made to the original questions based on this expert input to increase the validity of the questions.

The first interview was followed 10–14 days later with a second interview to provide participants the opportunity to add additional information or clarify responses presented in the first interview. These interviews took place through live, computer-aided meetings using synchronous technology. The interviews were preceded by a short demographic questionnaire

provided via e-mail to each participant, along with an informed consent form that was signed and returned to the researcher prior to beginning the data collection.

Each interview session was audio recorded and transcribed by a professional transcriptionist. Interview notes were also taken by the principal investigator during the interviews. All recordings and notes were coded to keep the identity of the participants confidential and the audio recordings sent to the transcriptionist were not associated with any names or identities. Demographics and interview data were coded and analyzed for emerging themes. Member checking was conducted to ascertain that the researcher's interpretation of the participants' responses was accurate. Conclusions were drawn based on interpretation of the phenomenon as reported by the participants. Any potential bias due to the influence and perspective of the researcher was identified and discussed.

Careful attention was given to issues of credibility, transferability, and dependability of the data in the study (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). In order to address accuracy and credibility of the data, the study reflected the truth of the phenomenon as it occurred in its natural setting through a scripted interview process and careful transcription of the responses, thereby providing accurate data (Creswell, 2009). This was supported through the creation and maintenance of ongoing records to track all interactions, data collection, and analysis. Dependability assesses the quality of the data collection, analysis, and generation of conclusions based on the results (Creswell, 2009). This was assured through member checks after the interview data were collected and analyzed. An expert peer review of the procedures described above confirmed the credibility and dependability of the study (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

Introduction

Gone is the era of autocratic school administration where "the leader was perceived to be the one unquestionably in charge" (Dickmann & Stanford-Blair, 2009, p. 43). A bureaucratic system of leadership persists in education because of its practical application to educational settings (Czech & Forward, 2010), but a personal approach by the leader within the context of a changing educational environment must be adopted in order to be successful (Czech & Forward, 2010; Dickmann & Stanford, 2009). The new conditions created by societal and educational reform (Fullan, 2008; Rury, 2009) have created the need for a new type of school leaders—those who are in touch with their emotions and those of their followers and are able to communicate this in a manner that acknowledges the relational, human aspect of the organization, while still maintaining their managerial role as a leader (Benjamin et al., 2012; Brown, 2012; DeRoberto, 2011; Fullan, 2012).

Recent and ongoing research in the study of affective neuroscience has forged a way for leaders to access and cultivate skills in relationship development and its symbiotic partner, effective communication, through training in mindfulness (Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Shafir, 2003), compassion (Newberg &Waldman, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012), and emotion regulation (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Eckman, 2013). A review of the literature reveals solid evidence supporting the practice of compassionate, mindful, emotionally regulated communication as an inroad to an efficacious approach to school leadership (Gentry et al., 2007; Gordon, 2001; McKee et al., 2008; Olson & Brown, 2012; Waldman, 2010). Leadership of this nature is emulated by the characteristics of a servant leader (Barbuto & Wheeler, 2007; Spears,

2010) and the behaviors associated with the emotionally intelligent leader (Goleman, 2011; Moore, 2009; Tang et al., 2010).

A New Kind of Leader

The pressures put upon schools to rise up to a new level of proficiency, often measured by standards- based accountability systems, places the school administrator in a highly stressful position carrying a multidimensional leadership role (The College Board, 2006; Fullan, 2008; Satpathy & Mohapatara, 2012). A balanced leadership approach is required to maintain desire and motivation within the organization and at the same time ensure people feel valued and appreciated for their expertise and their commitment to the work to be done (Fullan, 2008). In other words, the school leader of the twenty-first century is charged with providing both formalized structure and emotional support in order for people to endure the change process and move through it with positive outcomes (Benjamin et al., 2012; Boedker et al., 2011; Brown, 2012; Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Price, 2012). As this new kind of leader emerges to lead schools through the maze of change initiatives, an emphasis on developing relationship skills will be necessary (The College Board, 2006; Fullan, 2012; Gordon, 2001).

In a study of high-performing work places in Australia (Boedker et al., 2011), researchers found that leaders in the highest performing organizations placed the management of people as their top priority. These organizations were not only more productive, but they also outperformed other organizations in their ability to encourage innovative thinking, involve employees as leaders, and to create a fair workplace environment (Boedker et al., 2011). In focusing on the human aspect of the organization, leaders have drawn upon and honed their people management skills (Brown, 2012; Brown & Moshavi, 2005; DeRoberto, 2011; Fullan, 2008; Holt & Marques, 2012). Price (2012) and Yarbrough (2011) found the level of satisfaction

and commitment of teachers is related to the relationships between principals and teachers, concluding that the supervisor–subordinate relationships within the school setting have significant effects on teachers' attitudes.

Leading educational change expert, Fullan (2012), asserted in his recent work on effective school leadership that the establishment of relationships between leaders and followers should be the first and foremost priority in the organization. He stated, "The rule of thumb here is that if you want to challenge someone to do better, you'd better build a relationship first" (p. 6). To create the conditions for necessary for effective change, Fullan suggested the leader must be able move situations from the status quo through the exertion of a certain amount of leader assertiveness. In order to for people to accept this assertiveness, they must trust the leader. This requires that the relationships developed within the organization are based on trust.

Brewster and Railsback (2003) came to a similar conclusion almost 10 years earlier in their Northwest Regional Education Laboratory report examining studies that addressed the influence of trusting relationships on school improvement efforts. Their analysis revealed a common link throughout several studies of the importance of establishing trusting relationships between principals and teachers. Listed among their advice to principals on how to build trust with teachers was the recommendation to demonstrate caring to teachers and to facilitate and model effective communication. Bryk and Schneider (2003) confirmed this advice, noting the important role that social respect and respectful exchanges play in establishing relational trust. They suggested genuinely listening and displaying respect for individuals, even when not in agreement, helps establish relational trust in the school community. A caring workplace environment where trusting leader–follower relationships are the norm is essential to successful school change and leader effectiveness (Boedker et al., 2011; Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk

& Schneider, 2003; The College Board, 2006; Fullan, 2012; Ulrich & Woodson, 2011) and can best be established through caring, empathetic communication (Borek, 2003; Fenniman, 2010 Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Price, 2012; Waldman, 2010; Yarbrough, 2011).

The Servant Leader

A theory of leadership strongly rooted in the leader's focus on supportive, empathetic relationships within the organization is servant leadership (Barbuto, 2007; Brown, 2012; McCuddy & Cavin, 2008; Spears, 2010). Introduced in 1983 by Greenleaf and further developed by researchers such as Spears (2010), servant leadership identifies leader character traits that portray the leader as a servant to the organization with the ultimate purpose of helping others in the organization grow to their fullest potential (McCuddy & Cavin, 2008). Spears (2010) studied Greenleaf's original work on servant leadership and developed an updated list of 10 characteristics, which he identified as being the most important and meaningful to the work of the servant leader. They include listening, empathy, healing, awareness, persuasion, conceptualization, foresight, stewardship, commitment to the growth of people, and building community.

These attributes are clearly connected to the establishment of a strong leader–follower relationship and are explained by Spears (2010) as follows:

Listening—the servant leaders must listen intently to others in order to hear the intent of the individual or group and clarify it. In addition, Spears (2010) noted, leaders must be skilled at listening to their inner voice and using self-reflection to improve their work.

Empathy—the servant leaders strive to understand and empathize with others. By recognizing and accepting people as unique individuals and rejecting behaviors, not people, the leaders are able to maintain an empathetic perspective.

Healing—the servant leaders recognize they have an opportunity to help others and themselves heal from emotional hurts.

Awareness—the servant leaders are aware of themselves and others, which aides them in understanding issues involving ethics, power, and values, and to view problems holistically.

Persuasion—the servant leaders rely on persuasion rather than positional authority to guide people through change. By convincing, rather than coercing, others they are able to build consensus in groups.

Conceptualization—the servant leaders seek to conceptualize a vision for the organization. In doing so, they must seek a balance between day-to-day operations and dreams for the future.

Foresight—the servant leaders are able to foresee the likely outcome of a situation using lessons from the past, realities of the present, and projecting future consequences of a decision.

Stewardship—the servant leader assume first and foremost a commitment to serving the needs of others. There is an emphasis on the use of openness and persuasion rather than control.

Commitment to the growth of people—the servant leaders believe that people are valuable and are committed to both the personal and professional growth of each person within the organization.

Building community—the servant leaders are aware of the need to build community within the organization and seek to identify the means for doing so. (Spears, 2010).

According to Barbuto (2007), the leader must either, naturally possess the character traits identified with servant leadership or, hone and develop skills associated with the desired characteristics. Those who adopt and fine-tune the attributes associated with a servant leader will ultimately strengthen their leadership practices (Spears, 2010) and open the pathway for bringing

mindfulness and compassion to their work: two important leader qualities considered fitting for this new age in education (Dodson-LaVelle, 2013; McKee et al., 2008; Newberg, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012). Current research on leadership suggests leaders will be more effective and more influential role models if they learn to lead mindfully and with compassion (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Lilius et al., 2011; Melwani, Mueller, & Overbeck, 2012; Newberg, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012).

In order for leaders to nurture a more mindful and compassionate approach in the context of the workplace, it is essential the leaders understand the emotional foundation of this way of functioning in and leading an organization (Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Fullan, 2008 ; Goleman, 2011; Moore, 2009). In a study on the role of emotion in secondary school leaders, Yamamoto (2010) found that leaders who tapped into an emotional aspect in their work had better relationships with teachers and staff than those who did not bring an emotional component to their leadership. Moore (2009) confirmed this by identifying the relationship between effective leaders and emotional intelligence.

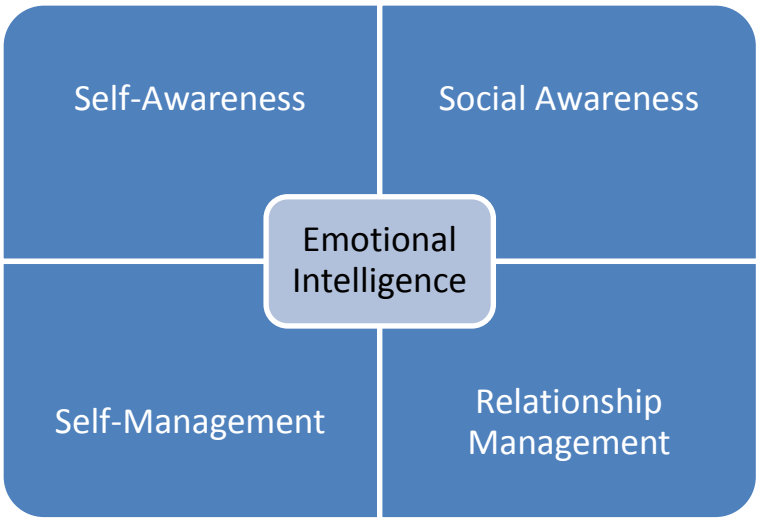
The Emotionally Intelligent Leader

Three main theories of emotional intelligence have been developed in the past 15 to 20 years in response to a movement toward a more interpersonal, transformational approach to leadership (Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Mayer et al., 2008; Sternberg, 2000). Of the three, Goleman's model is most easily associated with the school leader because it was designed around behaviors associated with successful organizational leadership (Brown & Moshavi, 2005; Goleman, 2011; McKee et al., 2008). Goleman's EI theory (see Figure 2), also known as EQ in the business world, (Goleman, 2011) is a framework built around four competencies that creates the fundamentals of his theory: (a) self-awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness,

and (d) relationship management (Goleman, 2011; McKee et al., 2008). According to Goleman (2011), the four competencies reflect the behaviors of the very best leaders and are backed by current brain research associated with emotions and behavior.

Figure 2

Goleman's Model of Emotional Intelligence



In comparing Goleman's (2011) four competencies of EI (2011) with attributes of the servant leader (Spears, 2008) discussed above, one is able to see how the traits considered as important to a servant leader can also be considered to fit within the framework for the emotionally intelligent leader, particularly the attributes of listening, empathy, healing, and awareness.

The ability to *listen* and communicate well with others has been shown to be a key to successful leadership (The College Board, 2006; Czech & Forward, 2010; DeRoberto, 2011; Goleman, 2011; Marturano, 2010; Reel, 2006; Spears, 2010) and a critical skill exhibited by emotionally intelligent leaders (Goleman, 2011; Newberg, 2012). In a paper published by the Center for Creative Leadership, researchers Gentry et al., (2007) maintained that *empathy* is a fundamental component of leadership and identified the central role of empathy in emotional

intelligence. They noted that effective leaders are able to experience and relate to the feelings, thoughts, and experiences of others, and by doing so, are able to respond with compassion and support. *Healing* is closely related to compassion, which requires a deep sensitivity to self and others (Neff & Germer, 2012). In Goleman's (2011) EI framework, this translates to competency in self-awareness and awareness of others. *Awareness* is an important aspect of all four competencies of emotional intelligence. One would not be able to exhibit social awareness, practice self-management, or successfully manage relationships without a strong overall mastery of emotional awareness (Goleman, 2011). The emotionally intelligent leader is competent in each of the four areas in varying degrees (Goleman, 2011; McKee et al., 2008), but the ability to develop awareness influences all four areas and, therefore, deserves further discussion.

A leader's ability to practice awareness of others and self is a critical factor in leader effectiveness and, specifically, a leader's ability to develop relationships and communicate well with others (Ashley & Reiter-Palmon, 2012; Goleman, 2011; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Satpathy & Mohapatara, 2012). Though the concepts of awareness and self-awareness are closely connected, Goleman (2011) placed special emphasis on self-awareness for leaders. Goleman identified self-awareness as "having a deep understanding of one's emotions, strengths, weaknesses, needs, and drives" (p. 345). He posited that leaders who are self-aware know themselves well enough to make decisions and map out plans accordingly, avoiding problems by making choices based on an awareness of their unique strengths and weaknesses. Considered essential to understanding others, self-awareness has been identified in functional magnetic resonance imaging studies of the brain that show activation of certain cerebral areas when emotions related to self-awareness are felt or expressed by the subject (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Goleman & Davidson, 2012). Understanding the brain basis of self-awareness and the

other aspects of emotional intelligence important for effective leadership will be helpful in building a conceptual bridge to the science behind the aspects of social and emotional intelligence, specifically those related to mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation (Brackett, 2013; Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Simon-Thomas, 2013).

The Neuroscience of Emotion

Recent research in affective and social neuroscience (Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012, 2013; Lutz et al., (2009); Simon-Thomas, 2013), aided by the use of advanced brain imaging technology, has revealed new information about the neural mechanisms of human emotions. Goleman and Davidson (2012) shared their expertise on the topic in a recent conversation that was recorded for public access. One important discovery discussed was that multiple parts of the brain and body are involved in an emotional response with a distributive network of neural and physical aspects working together (Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Hanson, 2012; Simon-Thomas, 2013; Slagter, Davidson, & Lutz, 2011). For example, during self-awareness, the insula (an area of the brain that regulates the visceral organs) is activated. If a connection is made to the prefrontal cortex where emotions are regulated, a mind–body connection takes place and individuals become aware of their emotions; a chill running down the spine is an example of this (Goleman and Davidson, 2012). A similar process takes place when one experiences the emotion of empathy. First, one has to be able to perceive or read what the other person is feeling through the person's voice, facial expressions, or other nonverbal cues (Eckman, 2013). When this happens, certain parts of the listener's brain communicate with the insula, and a feeling of empathy is generated (Eckman, 2013; Simon-Thomas, 2013). People actually feel the empathy through their brains and bodies simultaneously (Goleman & Davidson, 2012).

Additional research by Davidson and colleagues (Davidson & Begley, 2013) has shown that one's emotions are largely shaped by childhood experiences. Researchers have been able to pinpoint the specific areas of the brain affected and have concluded that these parts of the brain are the most *plastic* or malleable areas of the brain (Goleman & Davidson, 2012). From these findings, scientists have concluded that the *plasticity* of these areas of the brain makes it possible for people to retrain or learn new ways of processing and expressing emotions, even as adults (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012; Slagter et al., 2011). Dickmann and Stanford-Blair (2009) confirmed this, noting the plasticity of the brain continues throughout a person's life, leaving it open for learning and modification from experiences. This revelation has led to studies resulting in findings that support the use of contemplative practices, such as mindfulness meditation, to enhance cognitive and emotional regulation (Lutz, Brefczynski-Lewis, Johnstone, & Davidson, 2008; Mograbi, 2011; Nielsen & Kaszniak, 2006; Slagter et al., 2011; Tang et al., 2007; Van den Hurk et al., 2011).

Mindfulness

The concept of mindfulness, often overcomplicated and interpreted in a variety of ways, Harvard researcher Ellen Langer succinctly defined mindfulness as "the process of drawing distinctions" (Langer & Moldoveanu, 2000, p. 1). Mindfulness, she contended, heightens awareness by keeping the focus on the present, allowing one to notice things that would otherwise go unnoticed in a state of mindlessness. Langer went on to identify several results of practicing mindfulness, including "(a) a greater sensitivity to one's environment, (b) more openness to new information, (c) the creation of new categories for structuring perception, and (d) enhanced awareness of multiple perspectives in problem solving" (p. 2).

Similar conclusions were drawn by Martuano, the director of leadership education at the Center for Mindfulness in New York, and the vice president of public responsibility for the General Mills Corporation. In conjunction with the University of Massachusetts Center for Mindfulness, Martuano (2010) and colleagues conducted a study through their Cultivating Leadership Presence Through Mindfulness program. Over a period of four years, 350 participants either attended a four-and-a-half day retreat in mindfulness or received training through a 7-week course in mindfulness. Upon completion of the programs, the retreat attendees rated the level of changes experienced in 19 different categories of leadership behaviors. A statistically significant positive change was found in all 19 leadership behaviors surveyed. The top four areas and the percentage reporting positive change were as follows: taking time to reflect, 93%; enhanced listening, 89%; exhibiting patience, 88%; and making better decisions, 80%.

The participants in the 7-week course responded to the following three survey questions with the resulting precourse and postcourse responses:

- Fully attentive to a conversation:—precourse, 26%; postcourse, 77%
- Able to make time to prioritize work —precourse, 17%; postcourse, 54%
- Able to notice and self-redirect attention—precourse, 23%; postcourse, 67%

(Marturano, 2010, p. 26).

The application of mindfulness to improve the work of the school leader is obvious as the ability to reflect, listen, exhibit patience, make good decisions, be fully attentive to a conversation, prioritize work, and notice and self-redirect attention is an essential skill for the school leader. Recommendations for school leaders to incorporate mindfulness into their professional practice are rising in the field of educational research (The College Board, 2006;

Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Marturano, 2014; Olson & Brown, 2012) as compounding evidence in the neuroscientific research connects mindfulness to behaviors and qualities associated with effective leadership (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Tipsord, 2009). Educational experts from the design team of The College Board's Leadership Institute for Principals included a discussion of the importance of mindfulness for school leaders in their "think tank" sessions for building curriculum for future leaders. They defined mindfulness as "noticing new things and having a healthy respect for uncertainty; that when a person is made aware that they don't know something, they then listen differently" (The College Board, 2006, p. 19). The experts discussed aspects of mindfulness related to leadership such as empathy, communication, and being open to different perspectives and concluded with the need to promote awareness and opportunities for leaders and learners to habituate noticing.

Mindfulness in the educational setting has been gaining momentum with the primary purpose of enhancing learning by bringing mindfulness into the classroom (Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Dodson-Lavelle, 2013). Cowan and McKenna (2013), creators of the Mindful Schools curriculum and training program for schools, have worked with thousands of students and more than 2500 parents, teachers, and other education professionals to bring mindfulness into schools. Their groundbreaking study, conducted in 2011–2012 in partnership with the University of California, Davis, examined the influence of mindfulness training on behaviors of 937 children in three schools in Oakland, California. They found a statistically significant improvement in the areas of paying attention and social compliance after just four hours of mindfulness training with the students over a 6-week period.

At a recent presentation to educators at the University of California, Berkeley's Greater Good Science Center, Cowan and McKenna (2013) presented their rationale for taking

mindfulness into schools. “Mindfulness creates space,” McKenna claimed, “replacing reactions with thoughtful responses.” Based on successful clinical programs in health care and psychology using mindfulness to alleviate physical and emotional challenges, the Mindful Schools program works to bring inner tools of attention and awareness to students. Cowan reduced mindfulness simply to the act of “seeing” and suggested that the more individuals practice mindfulness, the more individuals build the muscle for it. Building the muscle is accomplished through mind focusing and mental awareness activities, including mindfulness meditation (Cowan & McKenna, 2013).

Mindfulness meditation is typically identified as the mental process of being aware of what is happening in and around an individual in an open, nonjudgmental way (Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Olson & Brown, 2012; Salzberg, 2013; Seppala, 2013). Developed and applied effectively by Kabat-Zinn at the University of Massachusetts Medical Center as part of the Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction program beginning in the 1980s, mindfulness meditation has taken hold in Western medicine and psychology as a scientifically proven approach to helping people deal with physical and emotional pain, trauma, and imbalance (Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Seppala, 2013). Neuroscientists, intrigued by people’s ability to adjust their responses to challenging life situations through mindfulness meditation, have conducted research to understand the neural mechanisms underlying this phenomenon. A variety of variables and outcomes have been studied, but the overarching conclusion has been that the biological functioning of the human brain changes during mindfulness meditation (Davidson, 2010; Lutz et al., 2008; Mograbi, 2011; Nielsen & Kaszniak, 2006; Slagter et al.; Tang et al., 2007; Van den Hurk et al., 2011). Of import to note is the associated behavioral and emotional changes that take place through the practice of mindfulness meditation result in a greater ability to sustain attention

and minimize distraction (Bishop et al., 2004; Lutz et al., 2009; Marturano, 2010), adopt a more positive outlook on life (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Hanson, 2013; Van den Hurk et al., 2011), establish more meaningful social connections (Neff & Germer, 2012; Seppala, 2009, 2013; Tipsord, 2009) and generate an overall improved sense of well-being (Brown & Ryan, 2003; Salzberg, 2013; Simon-Thomas, 2013).

Mindfulness can be cultivated through intentional focus or meditation on a specific aspect within or around one's self (Gunaratana, 2011; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Marturano, 2014). Often referred to as an anchor (Bishop et al., 2004; Cowan & McKenna, 2013), attention can be tuned to one's own breathing, sounds in the environment, or to noticing feelings in specific parts of the body—a method known as the body scan (Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Neff, 2013). Selection of an anchor depends on the individual's purpose as Bishop et al. (Bishop et al., 2004) posited in their operational definition of mindfulness. They proposed a two-part model of mindfulness with the first component being the self-regulation of attention, and the second the adoption of an open, accepting orientation toward one's experiences in the moment. Sustained attention on an anchor helps cultivate self-regulation, enhancing the ability to be less distracted and more aware of thoughts, feelings, and sensations in the present moment, ultimately resulting in a more accepting and positive perspective (Brackett, 2013; Hanson, 2013; Van den Hurk et al., 2011). To develop a more open mental orientation, Bishop et al. suggested adopting a mode of curiosity, so that whatever is noticed while meditating is observed with an attitude of openness and receptivity.

Another commonly used form of mindfulness meditation is compassion meditation, also known as loving-kindness meditation (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Gunaratana, 2012; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Neff, 2013; Salzberg, 2013; Seppala, 2009; Waldman, 2010). The purpose of

compassion meditation is to generate and extend feelings of empathy, compassion, kindness, love, and forgiveness to others and one's self (Kabat-Zinn, 2009). Practicing compassion meditation results in increased social connectedness and sustained happiness (Seppala, 2009), improved communication and interpersonal relationships (Waldman, 2010), and the development of more positive emotions both toward self and others (Hofmann et al., 2011; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Neff, 2013). Practicing loving-kindness meditation is one aspect of developing a more mindful perspective.

The cultivation of mindfulness can be accomplished through a formal practice of meditation and also through a more informal intention to increase awareness and openness in day-to-day life (Bishop et al., 2004; Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Gunaratana, 2011; Hanson, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Marturano, 2014; Neff, 2013). For example, stopping in the middle of a stressful event or situation and bringing one's attention to the breath while adopting a noticing rather than judging perspective can help reduce anxiety and tension (Bishop et al., 2004; Gunaratana, 2011; Hanson, 2013; Neff, 2013). Even less formal but still effective is adopting a general intention to be aware in the moment—more present in what one is doing or how one is feeling, both physically and emotionally (Halliwell, 2013). The ability to step into a mode of mindfulness in the middle of a challenging moment is more easily accomplished if one has developed the mindfulness muscle Cowan referred to through a regular practice in mindfulness meditation (Bishop et al., 2004; Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2009).

Studies in affective neuroscience have shown the relationship between the amount of time spent in contemplative practice and the level of brain activity while meditating, specifically in neural areas related to emotion (Lutz et al., 2008). In a study comparing the neural functioning of 16 long-term meditators, to 16 novice meditators, Lutz et al. set out to determine if the degree

of experience in meditation training would influence the response of meditators. The participants were prompted to generate feelings of compassion for others through loving-kindness meditation, while listening to sounds of human distress. The expert meditators had 10,000 to 50,000 hours of meditation experience, while the novices had no prior experience and were provided with written instructions and one week of meditation practice. The participants were exposed to positive, neutral and distressing sounds while in both meditative and restful states and concurrent brain activity was measured through functional magnetic resonance imaging. The meditation experts exhibited stronger overall activation during meditation than rest in certain limbic regions and in brain circuitry previously linked to thoughts of concern for others. Stronger activation during the emotional sounds was detected in the right hemisphere of experts, while no difference in activation in novices was detected in these regions during rest versus meditation. This research points to the modulating effect of meditation on the brain and also to the ability to identify meditative practices in relation to emotion, particularly the emotion of compassion. Hanson (2012) discussed the ramifications of Lutz et al.'s study in his presentation of The Compassionate Brain: How the Mind Changes the Brain, noting that the areas of the brain activated in the expert meditators are the areas previously associated in prior neuroimaging research with empathetic responses associated with compassion. Hanson deduced that through mindfulness meditation, people could adopt a more compassionate perspective of the world, themselves, and the people with whom they associate.

Compassion

The scientific evidence showing the brain is malleable and can generate empathetic responses through compassion meditation is meaningful to this study when examining the implications of empathy and compassion for effective leadership. Bill George, a Harvard

Business School professor, stated during his recent address to graduates of Augsburg College, **"**Successful leaders lead with the heart, not just the head. They possess qualities like empathy, compassion, and courage. They also have the ability to establish deep, long-term, and genuine relationships where others trust them" (George, 2013).

Leading with the heart has not always been equated with the qualities of strong leadership. According to Cropper (2009), the accepted profile of a successful leader has traditionally included descriptors such as tough, hard-nosed, decisive, and rational. In his book *Leadership: The Power of Emotional Intelligence*, Goleman (2011) discussed findings from a study of 250 business executives who felt that their work required more of their head than their heart and that their commitment to the organization's goals would be compromised if they felt empathy or compassion for their employees. Regardless of past social norms, a changing world requires the type of leader who does indeed lead with heart (Cropper, 2009; Fullan, 2008; George, 2013; Goleman, 2011), a skill which requires tapping into one's emotional intelligence (Brown & Moshavi, 2005; DeRoberto, 2011; Durango, n.d.; Tang et al., 2010). The ability to express empathy and compassion is central to emotionally intelligent leadership and is necessary for establishing important interpersonal relationships with employees (Boedker et al., 2011; Gentry et al., 2007; Goleman, 2011; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Yamamoto, 2010).

An explanation of empathy and compassion will be helpful in understanding how the leader can apply them in to a relationship-centered approach to leading. Boyatzis et al. (2006), suggested compassion is comprised of three components: "(a) empathy or understanding the feelings of others, (b) caring or *affiliative arousal* for the other person, and (c) willingness to act in response to the person's feelings" (p. 12). Empathy and compassion are often used interchangeably, but as the definition implies, empathy is a precursor to compassion. Empathy is

the ability to experience and relate to the thoughts, emotions, or experience of others (Gentry et al., 2007; Goleman & Davidson, 2012), while compassion is a desire and willingness to put the empathetic response into action based on a feeling of caring for the other person (Hanson, 2012; Neff, 2013; Simon-Thomas, 2013).

The capability to express empathy has been found to be an effective tool for leadership. In a study of 6,731 leaders from 38 countries, Gentry et al. (2007) found empathy is positively related to job performance, determining that leaders who naturally demonstrate empathy have an advantage over their peers. The importance of empathy in establishing productive workplace relationships has been well established (Brown & Borek, 2003; Goleman, 2011; Shafir, 2003; Waldman, 2010), as well as its influence on the degree of trust in the relationship (Brewster & Railsback, 2003; Bryk & Schneider, 2003; Fullan, 2012; Newberg & Waldman, 2012). Due to the brain's plasticity, the ability to be more empathetic can be learned (Gentry et al., 2007; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Seppala, 2009). Mindfulness at the dispositional level is associated with higher levels of empathetic concern (Tipsord, 2009) and cultivating mindfulness by practicing compassion meditation is shown to be a successful avenue for learning and improving empathetic responses (Seppala, 2009, 2013).

Mindfulness has also been shown to raise the level of compassion capability in individuals (Cowan & McKenna, 2013; Davidson & Begley, 2013; Neff, 2013), and when practiced by leaders, mindfulness can aid in developing a more compassionate response (Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012). Compassion encompasses empathy and moves it to the level of action, which creates the opportunity for leaders to connect with followers in a positive way (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Cropper, 2009; Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009). Because positive relationships are essential to strong principal–teacher relationships

(DeRobeto, 2011; Yarbrough, 2011), building greater social connectivity in the organization is important. In addition to developing skills in mindfulness, leaders can form stronger social bonds simply by connecting more with staff on a personal level and by recognizing the similarities created by the common purpose of the work in the organization.

This is illustrated in an interesting study conducted by Valdesolo and DeSteno (2011), examining the synchrony and social tuning of compassion. Participants, $n = 69$, were asked to observe a moral transgression taking place against an individual and then report the similarity they perceived and the amount of compassion they felt for the victim. Before viewing the victim being offended, the participants engaged in either a synchronous or asynchronous hand tapping pattern with the victim. The results showed those participants who engaged in the synchronous hand tapping felt more similar to the victim and felt more compassion for their morally challenging experience. The researchers concluded that synchronous action, including social action, functionally directs the level of compassion in response to an individual's dilemma and creates more interest in their well-being.

Concern over the well-being of others is a driving factor in compassion, but too much concern over others with minimal concern for one's self can result in a lessened desire and ability to be compassionate (Neff, 2013). The result is compassion or empathy fatigue, which is associated with professional stress and burnout (Eckman, 2013; Neff, 2013). Particularly susceptible to burnout, asserted Neff (2013), are professionals in health care and education who take on the needs of others as part of their work. Neff asserted self-compassion can ease the stress associated with professional burnout, helping people to take on helpful perspectives that aide in coping and engender resilience (Neff, 2013).

Neff (2013) has been a leading researcher in self-compassion at the University of Austin, TX where she has examined the effects of self-compassion in the realms of happiness and well-being, motivation, relationship behavior, parenting, coping and resilience, and the cultivation of self-compassion through mindfulness. Founder of the Mindful Self-Compassion Program, her work has shown self-compassion is a necessary element of happiness and well-being, and that the development of a more self-compassionate frame of mind can positively affect motivation, relationships, family dynamics, and resilience in the face of adversity (Neff, 2003, 2013; Neff & Germer, 2013; Raes, Pommier, Neff, & Van Gucht, 2011).

Neff (2013) was careful to distinguish between self-esteem and self-compassion, asserting that self-esteem is the equivalent of self-worth, which is something to be obtained and is marked by the need to be special or above average. This causes social comparisons resulting in negative behaviors such as narcissism, bullying, prejudice, and a personal worth based on a contingent factor, the final outcome usually being feelings of inadequacy. She proposed self-compassion as a healthier way of navigating the ups and downs of life.

According to Neff (2003), self-compassion is comprised of three main components: (a) self-kindness versus self-judgment; (b) common humanity versus isolation; and (b) mindfulness versus over-identification. Self-kindness involves treating one's self with care and understanding, engaging in self-soothing and self-comforting when needed. Common humanity refers to the recognition that one's experience is part of the larger human experience, and it is not abnormal or isolating. Neff (2013) maintained this perspective separates self-compassion from self-pity. Mindfulness in relation to self-compassion helps one to experience the painful experience for what it is, avoiding extreme responses of suppressing or running away from the feelings (Neff, 2013). Educators can apply these self-compassion practices to their work in two

ways—by recognizing moments of one's own pain and difficulty with a self-compassionate response, and by acknowledging another's pain and difficulty in a self-compassionate way that allows for caring without taking the burden on as their own. By maintaining equanimity in the situation, the educator is better able to maintain a stance of helpfulness and provide support without risking compassion fatigue or burnout. This in turn ensures the possibility of establishing healthy, lasting relationships in the school setting. Neff (2013) shared two mantras that can be helpful in employing self-compassion to the two different approaches describes above. Neff suggested pausing in the difficult moment and practicing mindful breathing, while saying the words to one's self.

1. Self-Compassionate Response Mantra

   This is a moment of suffering.

   Suffering is a part of life.

   May I be kind in this moment.

   May I give myself the compassion I need.

2. Compassion Equanimity Mantra

   Everyone is on his or her on life journey.

   I am not the cause of this person's suffering,

   Nor is it completely in my power to make it go away,

   But I wish I could.

   This moment is difficult to be in, and

   I will try to help as best I can. (Neff, 2013, GGSC Summer Institute for Educators)

Neff maintained that in order to be compassionate with others, one must first be able to be turn compassionate toward one's self, noting that there is a difference between self-care and self-compassion. "Self-care," she stated, "is like drowning and getting out of the water while self-compassion is developing the skills to breathe underwater; it provides the calm in the midst of the storm" (2013). The fact that there is a storm and a need to create calm within it is the rationale for the final concept presented as part of the theoretical framework of this study—emotion regulation.

Emotion Regulation

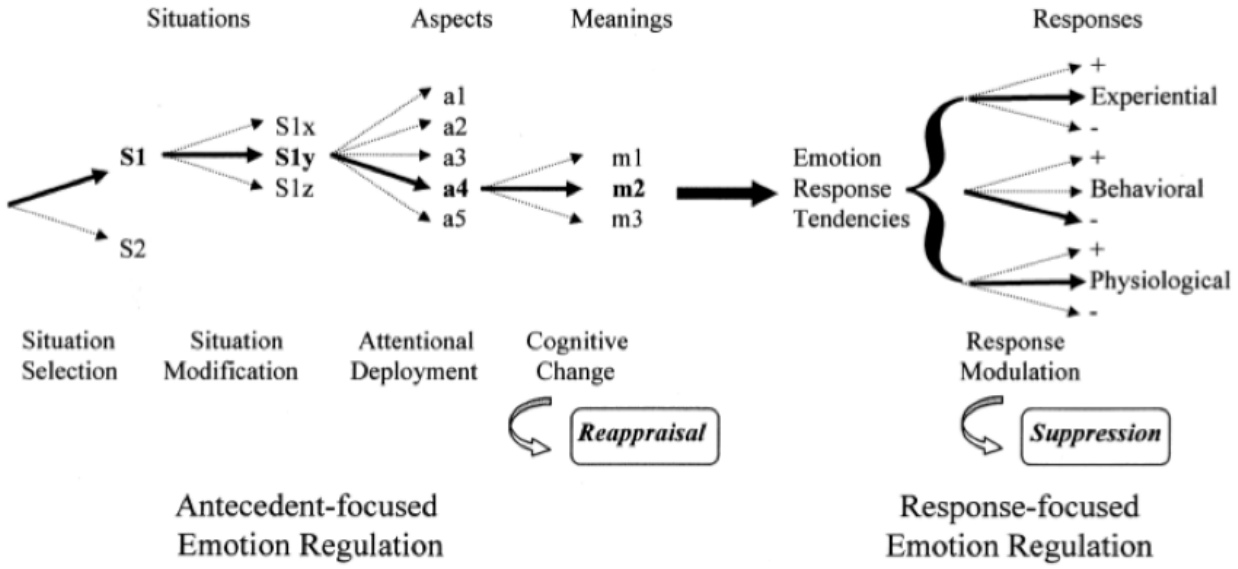
In order to coherently discuss the importance of the regulation of emotions in school administrators, it is necessary first to understand what emotions are and what it means to regulate emotions. The power of emotions in the human experience has been recognized for thousands of years, yet due to their complexity and the variant meaning and application of the word *emotion*, psychologists have wrestled with the definition (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Eckman, 2013; Gross, 1999). Gross, professor of psychology at Stanford University and director of the Stanford Psychophysiology Lab, has studied emotions and emotion regulation. Through his work, he has developed a three part definition of emotion suggesting that a human experience can be classified as an emotion if it (a) has significant meaning to the individual; (b) is a multifaceted, whole-body experience from the central nervous system to peripheral physiological changes, including autoimmune and neuroendocrine responses; and (c) can be described as dimensions or categories (Gross, 1999). Dimensions describe emotions as a continuum of emotional experience, expression, and physiology, while categories place emotions in discrete categories, such as anger and fear.

These discrete categories of emotion can be conceptually related to the seven families of emotion commonly accepted in the field of psychology (Eckman, 2013). The seven families of anger, disgust, contempt, fear, surprise, sadness, and happiness or enjoyment are considered universal emotions, which can be identified across cultures and genders as common to all people. Based on a study of facial expressions in Papua, New Guinea, scientists developed a set of universal facial expressions that represent the seven families of emotion, each elicited by a universally common trigger. For example, the facial expression when presented with a putrid odor is universally one of disgust. The seven emotions are considered families or themes because of the variation within the themes that occurs due to ancestral genetic history (Eckman, 2013).

Beyond the seven universal responses to common triggers, people vary widely in their emotional response, which is due primarily to the different ways people regulate their emotions (Brackett, 2013; Gross, 1999), called “emotional style” by Davidson and Begley (2013). According to Gross, emotion regulation is “the ways individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience or express these emotions” (1999, p. 542). Gross provided a model (see Figure 3) of the process of emotion regulation that begins with an emotional antecedent or cue followed by emotion response tendencies, which are experiential, behavioral, or physiological, resulting in an emotional response. The regulation of emotion in his model is either focused on the antecedent or the response. If an individual places emphasis on the antecedent, the result will be a reappraisal of the situation and a changed emotional response. If the focus is on the response itself, the result will be the modulation of an emotion through suppression. In an antecedent-focused regulation of emotion, the outcome is a decrease in the expression and experience of emotion. An increased activation of the sympathetic nervous system results from a response-focused regulation of emotion (Gross, 1999)

Figure 3

Gross's (1999) Process of Emotion Regulation.



A heightened sympathetic nervous system as the result of an emotional response can be taxing on an individual, both mentally and physically, that over time can result in health problems, relationship issues, and emotional burnout (Brackett, 2013; Dickman & Stanford-Blair, 2009; Eckman, 2013; Kabat-Zinn, 2009; Neff, 2013). The overarousal of emotions equates to the condition known as stress, which is magnified by the combination of intensity, density, and frequency of the overarousal (Eckman, 2013). Brackett (2013), from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, explained the powerful influence of emotions on people's lives. He ascertained they drive attention (specifically the functions of memory and learning), decision making, relationships, everyday behavior and performance, and overall health. All emotions can be either constructive or destructive, according to Eckman (2013), depending on the intensity, timing, and appropriateness of the response. The key to producing constructive rather than

destructive emotional responses is the regulation and balance of emotions (Brackett, 2013; Eckman, 2013).

The regulation of emotions can be approached in a number of ways, but a common factor is the need for a certain level of emotional intelligence in order to read and understand emotions as they arise in one's self and others (Brackett, 2013). Brackett and colleagues from the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence created the RULER program to help students and teachers develop skills in emotional intelligence and emotion regulation. RULER is an acronym for a set of strategies one can employ when trying to regulate emotions. It represents the following:

R—Recognize (tone of voice, body language, physiology)

U—Understand (causes and consequences of the emotions)

L—Label (name the emotion)

E—Express (appropriately to the context)

R—Regulate (effectively to foster healthy relationships and achieve goals)

Brackett suggested employing mindfulness as a way to provide time and space for employing regulation strategies between the trigger and the emotion (2013). Other findings support this suggestion. In their study of the benefit of integrating contemplative practices with psychological models and methods of emotion regulation, Kemeny et al. (2012) found that increased awareness of mental processes can influence emotional behavior. In concurrence, Goleman and Davidson (2012) discussed the ways contemplative practices aide in the regulation of emotions, noting that meditation or focused contemplation helps create a balanced prefrontal cortex with an even ratio of activity between the right prefrontal cortex and the left prefrontal cortex. This is important because the right side is activated when one is feeling distressed or unhappy, and the left side is activated when feeling energized or enthusiastic. A balanced

prefrontal cortex provides for a balanced emotional state and an overall sense of well-being. In addition to creating a balanced prefrontal cortex, regular contemplative practices help people to develop the ability to focus longer and have fewer breaks in attention (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Simon-Thomas, 2013). This enhances one's ability to listen more attentively and, in turn, develop more empathy and compassion for others (Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012; Marturano, 2010; Olson & Brown, 2012; Seppala, 2009; Tipsord, 2009; Waldman, 2010).

For educational leaders, the implications of current brain research points to the potential for leaders to learn new ways of thinking and doing as they develop skills in interpersonal relationships and communication. The idea that the brain is plastic and changeable provides leaders with an open door to learning and employing more emotionally based, people-centered leadership strategies. One such strategy that ties the recent brain research findings to effective leadership is the practice of compassionate communication (Lilius et al., 2011; Melwani et al., 2012; Newberg, 2012; Valdesolo & DeSteno, 2011).

Compassionate Communication

In her book, *The Zen of Listening,* Shafir (2003) suggested we are living in the "Age of Distraction," which daily challenges the ability to listen (p. 1). Even more than the external barrage of distractions caused by the media, advertising, technology, and a typically noisy environment, she pointed to the internal rumble of inner distractions that prevent people from truly and deeply listening to others and themselves. According to Shafir (2003), negative self-talk, worry over time, finances, multitasking, aversion to people and things, obsessions with the past, and a preoccupation with the future, are the types of disruptions that cloud one's mind and keep one from fully engaging with others. When one is distracted and fails to completely listen to others and one's self, communication breaks down and effective leadership is diminished

(Borek, 2003; Chance & Chance, 2002; McKee, 2008; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Waldman, 2010).

Forward, Czech, and Allen (2007) maintained that in order to successfully lead, motivate, and inspire people in an organization, it is essential that competent communication take place. Communication is listed as a key factor in leader effectiveness throughout the research on leadership and is typically identified as a skill in which leaders need more training and practice (The College Board, 2006; Czech & Forward, 2010; DeRoberto, 2011; Goleman, 2011; Marturano, 2010; Reel, 2006; Spears, 2010). Taking a clear stance regarding the influence of communication on the success of an organization, Satpathy and Mohapatra (2012) claimed, "Effective workplace communication is essential to the organization's success. Our communication skills help us to understand not just words; we share meaning, emotion, feelings, and attitude in a fundamental drive to communicate" (p. 1).

It would be difficult to dispute the need for effective communication in the workplace, but what comprises effective communication and why is listening so critical? Researchers (Czech & Forward, 2010; Gentry et al., 2007) have found the way in which leaders communicate has considerable impact on their effectiveness in terms of relationships and the organization as a whole. They discovered positive results in relation to communication and control and noted that leaders use a variety of communication approaches to articulate their vision and goals and to solve problems (Goleman, 2011).

In addition to identifying communication behaviors of effective leaders, it is helpful to consider the process of communicating itself. Communication is a two-way street requiring both listening and speaking (or nonverbal communication) in order for understanding to take place between two or more people (Newberg & Waldman, 2012). The brain is programmed to

reverberate and make sense of other peoples' words (Waldman, 2010) and to respond empathetically to others' pain and suffering (Fenniman, 2010; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Hanson, 2012). Without the ability to listen, one would not be able to receive the necessary information to communicate or feel empathy for others (Drollinger et al., 2006; Fenniman, 2010; Newberg, 2012). Listening is literally the key to communication, and deep, empathetic listening translates to compassionate communication, the type of communication that makes a difference in organizations (Borek, 2003; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Satpathy & Mohapatra, 2012; Shafir, 2003; Undung & de Guzman, 2009).

Compassionate communication is described by Newberg and Waldman (2012) as being as much about listening as it is about speaking. They proposed that in order to develop and maintain the necessary focus required to truly listen to others, people must train their minds. The purpose of training should be to develop a deeper level of listening, which involves paying attention to the other person's words and nonverbal cues and one's inner chatter (Shafir, 2003; Waldman, 2012). Newberg (2012) and Shafir (2003) recommended that in order for compassionate communication to take place, leaders specifically need to develop the ability to remain silent, both within and without, thereby giving their full attention to what the other person is saying.

Newberg and Waldman (2012) suggested 12 strategies for developing the capacity to communicate more effectively with compassion. They are titled, "The Twelve Strategies of Compassionate Communication," and are as follows:

1. Relax
2. Stay present
3. Cultivate inner silence

4. Increase positivity
5. Reflect on your deepest values
6. Access a pleasant memory
7. Observe nonverbal cues
8. Express appreciation
9. Speak warmly
10. Speak slowly
11. Speak briefly
12. Listen deeply (p. 105–106)

In addition to connecting with and more clearly understanding the other person, deep listening interrupts the inner speech that is continually firing from the language centers of the brain (Newberg, 2012). Shafir (2003) discussed how this level of listening can break down the barriers that prevent effective communication and can open the door for open, mindful communication. Olson and Brown (2012) encouraged the development of mindful listening through daily practice in mindful meditation. By training oneself to be present in the moment, leaders can cultivate the ability to listen with compassion and empathy (Borek, 2003; Kabat-Zinn, 2013; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Salzberg, 2013; Satpathy & Mohapatra, 2012; Shafir, 2003).

The leader's ability to relate to and understand another's perspective, or feel empathy, comes to the forefront as an important factor in successful relationships and sincere listening (Brown & Borek, 2003; Goleman, 2011; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Shafir, 2003; Waldman, 2010). The ability to show and express empathy as a leader has been identified as a factor in creating a caring workplace environment (Brown, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012), fostering trust

between principals and teachers (McGuire, 2007), and enabling meaningful listening and communication (Borek, 2003; Goleman, 2011; Newberg & Waldman, 2012; Shafir, 2003; Undung & de Guzman, 2009). In their study on care-driven leadership, Undung and de Guzman (2009) found listening was correlated to empathetic responses in university academic administrators. Listening with empathy provides a pathway to compassionate communication for the school leader (Newberg, 2012; Olson & Brown, 2012).

The act of listening with empathy has been studied most commonly in the field of business communication and leadership, also called active listening, empathetic listening, reflective listening, or active empathetic listening (Bodie, 2011; Drollinger et al., 2006; Fenniman, 2010; Gordon, 2001). Active empathetic listening involves both the speaker and listener in active engagement in the communication process and is considered to be essential to close relationships (Bodie, 2011). According to Bodie's definition, the listeners are conscious of their listening behaviors and the speakers are aware of the listeners' attempts to actively listen. Also referred to as reflective listening (Borek, 2003; Gordon, 2001), the listeners are intentional in their purpose to hear and understand the speakers. Unique to active, empathetic listening is the desire to not only hear and understand what the speaker is saying, but to also understand how the speaker is feeling (Fenniman, 2010).

Active empathetic listening places the leader in a role of inquiry and advocacy, creating the conditions for a coaching, rather than evaluative, mode of conversation (Eckman, 2013). The opportunity to build meaningful bridges and establish a strong working relationship through active empathetic listening is optimal, but the leader must be very self-aware and purposeful when communicating, both in relation to what he or she is expressing and what the speaker is expressing (Gentry et al., 2007). At the neurological level, the brain generates mirror neurons

during communication, causing people to mirror one another's emotions (Eckman, 2013; Hanson, 2012). The result is a repertoire of communication that takes place beyond the words that are being said. Body language, facial expressions, tone of voice, and subtle emotional responses are picked up by the listener (Hanson, 2012; Newberg & Waldman, 2012). Using active listening skills, such as bracketing (setting other thoughts aside), paraphrasing, checking perceptions, and monitoring body language, are all useful inroads to relationship-building communication, and underlying all of these skills, according to Eckman (2013), is mindfulness.

Conclusion

The well-known Prayer of St. Francis of Assisi, first published by Father Esther Bouquerel in 1912, encapsulates the moral ethos of this study aimed at developing school leaders who embody a more mindful, compassionate, emotionally intelligent mode of leadership in their work through the selflessness of servant leaders.

The Prayer of Saint Francis

Lord make me an instrument of your peace

Where there is hatred,

Let me sow love;

Where there is injury, pardon;

Where there is error, truth;

Where there is doubt, faith;

Where there is despair, hope;

Where there is darkness, light;

And where there is sadness, Joy.

O Divine Master grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled

As to console;

To be understood, as to understand;

To be loved, as to love.

For it is in giving that we receive,

It is in pardoning that we are pardoned,

And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life (Renoux, 2001, p. 21-28).

How then, can these social and emotional qualities be engendered in school leaders, and what is the pathway for providing the opportunity for administrators to understand, adopt, and employ them in their work in schools? Is it appropriate and important to consider the inclusion of emotional intelligence curriculum in the preparation of school leaders?

The research methods, analysis, influence of the researcher and limitations were designed to answer these questions through the use of an in-depth study of two specific principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system.

Chapter III

Design and Methodology

The purpose of this study was to understand the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation programs in the Nazarene university system. In order to achieve this purpose, a qualitative exploration of the understanding and presence of emotional intelligence curriculum in principal preparation programs in two universities in the Nazarene system, as well as the perceived potential and associated hindrances of incorporating such curriculum into future programs for principal preparation, was conducted. The investigation employed the following research design, participants, data collection, analytical methods, and limitations described.

Research Design

Through the use of in-depth interviews, the understanding and value of curriculum built around leadership as it relates to emotional intelligence in preservice principal preparation programs were examined. Interviews were arranged with the pairs of program directors from the schools of education from two Nazarene Universities. The purpose of interviewing two directors from each university was to deepen the study by providing two expert perspectives from each university, thereby creating a triangulation of the data (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Approval was sought from the provost of each university before inviting the department heads; the dean of the school of education and the chair of the educational leadership program (or equivalent titles), to participate in the phenomenological study.

Modifications were made to the original research design that were intended to include three Nazarene universities in the study and a total of six individual participants. Three of the seven universities in the Nazarene system were identified as potential participants due to the presence of principal preparation programs in their education departments. Letters explaining the

purpose of the study and inviting participation were sent to the department heads of the three universities. Two of the three universities responded with a desire to participate in the study, which resulted in adjusting the study size to accommodate two universities and a total of four individual participants as opposed to three universities and six total participants. Though the design was modified, the phenomenological approach was maintained. Marshall and Rossman (2011) defined the qualitative phenomenological approach as the process of making meaning of the individually lived experience through in-depth interviews of several individuals who have experienced the phenomenon of interest. The reduction in the number of participants did not change the phenomenological approach; however, it was recognized that the analysis, results, and subsequent conclusions could have been influenced by the use of fewer participants. Six participants instead of four would have resulted in a larger set of data with the potential for a broader scope of understanding of the phenomenon studied. Additional themes could have emerged, and different results and conclusions may have been drawn.

Interviews were scheduled with the participants who agreed to meet through synchronous technology using either Adobe Connect or Facetime. In addition, the interviews were preceded by completion of a short, demographic questionnaire (see Appendix B), which was provided via e-mail to each participant. To maintain confidentiality, the universities were identified by pseudonyms as University 1, and University 2. The four department heads were identified numerically as Participant 1 (P1) through Participant 4 P4. Randomly assigning this order further ensured confidentiality. Informed consent was obtained prior to the interviews via e-mail. Signed forms were returned to the principal investigator, and any questions from participants were clarified before the interviews began (see Appendix A).

The questions asked during the interviews were piloted using six education experts knowledgeable of course content and programs in educational leadership. Expert review of the questions was conducted to ensure the validity of the questions (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011; Roberts, Priest, & Traynor, 2006). The experts were asked to provide feedback regarding the clarity of the questions to confirm the questions were worded appropriately and elicited the type of responses sought. In addition, the experts were asked to provide input about whether or not any of the questions were misleading and if they successfully tapped into the research topic. Finally, suggestions for improving the study, based on the interview questions, were sought. Individuals who were asked to pilot the interview questions may or may not have been acquaintances of the principal investigator and may or may not have been staff of Northwest Nazarene University.

Participants

The purpose of this study was to examine preservice preparation of principals in educational leadership programs provided by two private universities in the Nazarene university system. Eight universities make up the Nazarene university system and the two participating universities were selected based on the presence of a principal preparation program in their education department along with the willingness of the education department directors to participate in the phenomenological study. Approval from the universities' provosts was sought before program directors were invited to participate in the study. Participants were selected based on their roles in the university in relation to the educational leadership programs. The dean of the college of education and chair or equivalent program administrator of the educational leadership program from the universities made up the participant pool.

The researcher's own university, which was also part of the Nazarene university system, was excluded from this study for several reasons that could have caused bias or conflict in the data collection and analysis. Such reasons included the fact that the principal investigator was a student in the university's doctoral program and was familiar, both personally and professionally, with staff from the department of educational leadership. In addition, the principal investigator had a history of teaching as an adjunct instructor for the university's educational leadership program, which further compounded the conflict.

Before interviews were administered, participants were provided with an informed consent form (see Appendix A), which included information regarding the purpose and background of the study, procedures, risks and discomforts, benefits, payments, contact information, notification of the voluntary nature of their participation, and a signature line giving consent. Any questions participants had about the study were answered by the researcher, and participants were informed that they may drop participation from the program at any time. No remuneration was offered for participating in the study; however, participants were offered information regarding the results upon completion of the study.

Only the researcher had access to the data and associated identities of participants, including notes and audio recordings. The professional transcriptionist had access to the interview data, but no identities or names were revealed to the transcriptionist, including identities of the universities participating in the study. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications that may result from this study. All data from notes, audio tapes, and disks were kept in a locked cabinet at the home of the principal investigator. In compliance with the Federalwide Assurance Code, data from this study were to be kept for three years, after which all data from the study were to be destroyed (45 CFR 46.117).

Data Collection

The semi structured interviews were conducted through synchronous technology. Adobe Connect was used for one participant, and Facetime was used for the remaining three. The participants were located in their private university offices, while the interviewer asked questions from her personal office. The interviews were conducted in private with no other individuals present and the initial sessions lasted approximately 45 minutes to one hour. Three of the four initial interviews were followed by a second, shorter informal interview, 10–14 days later, to give each participant an opportunity to provide additional feedback or share thoughts that may have arisen after the initial interview. This procedure was in keeping with accepted procedures in qualitative data collection (Creswell, 2009; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). One of the four participants was not able to participate in a follow-up interview due to circumstances that were not in control of the researcher. This resulted in a smaller overall collection of data from the participant that was taken into account during the analysis. Each interview session was audio recorded and transcribed by a professional transcriptionist. Interview notes were also taken by the principal investigator during the interviews. All recordings and notes were coded to keep the identity of the participants confidential (see Appendix C).

All interview dates, data collection, and data analysis were recorded on a calendar kept by the researcher. Electronic files of e-mail correspondences and transcribed interviews were kept in a designated file known only to the researcher. Hard copy records of the data were kept in a secured file cabinet accessible only to the researcher, and electronic files were password protected. Results of the study were shared only as generalizations of the findings in order to protect the connection of individual data to specific universities and individuals participating in the study.

Analytical Methods

An ongoing process of reading, reviewing, examining, organizing, sorting, and coding the data was conducted that created an immersion in the data over time (Creswell, 2009). This set the conditions for a thorough and intimate analysis of the data. Interview data were analyzed for emerging themes, initially, through a process of organizing the transcribed conversations into manageable units based around the research questions (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). A system of color coding the units on an Excel spreadsheet was employed for the first round of analysis. Headings were made for each research question guiding the study, and data from the interview scripts were copied and pasted into place under the question headings that corresponded with the response. Some responses fell under more than one heading and were assigned as such.

The organization of data into units was followed by a synthesis of the data for emerging themes identified by coding of the responses. As data was reviewed, common responses with similar wording, meanings, or implications began to emerge as themes across the data and were marked with a highlighter. A second round through the highlighted phrases resulted in an identification of themes or ideas associated with the research questions. These phrases were listed as one- to three-word descriptions of the theme on a separate piece of paper, which was titled with the associated research question. The identified themes on the sheets of paper were then reviewed and double checked with the data. Changes were made if appropriate and then letter codes were assigned to each of the themes using the word or words in the phrase as a guide. Letter codes were handwritten onto the interview data initially with a pen, and then a second time around with the use of miniature Post-its, which were assigned to the letter codes by color. The analysis continued until all identified themes were marked and no new themes arose from the data, achieving theoretical saturation (Roberts et al., 2006).

The analysis of the interview transcripts was supported by the review of several additional documents that were examined for information pertaining to the research questions. This was carried out in order to deepen the inquiry into the topic and strengthen the analysis and induce conclusions. Included in this review were the conceptual frameworks from each university, the course listings and related descriptions from the educational leadership programs in both universities, and the demographic questionnaires completed by each participant in the study. Course titles used in the results were modified in order to protect the identity of the universities, while retaining the meaning of the titles. Results of all analyses were taken into consideration to ensure reliability through triangulation (Creswell, 2009). Conclusions were drawn based on interpretation of the phenomenon as reported by the participants. As with any qualitative study, the credibility, personal and professional background of understanding, experiences, and beliefs of the researcher influenced the study.

Roles of the Researcher

No person is devoid of a background of beliefs, a value system, or an ingrained personality and associated behavior patterns (Creswell, 2009). These ingrained personal beliefs and tendencies create bias in any research, and more particularly in qualitative research due to the researcher's deep personal involvement and unavoidable influence on the research (Roberts, et al., 2006). The entire research process is influenced by researchers, from their formulation of a topic and questions to the analysis and conclusions. In order for qualitative researchers to perceive the phenomenon separately from their personal insight, it is important for them to bracket their personal experiences (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Bracketing, or identifying one's personal insight and potential influence on the research, can be guided by asking the following questions of one's self as the researcher: "What do I know? How do I know what I know? What

shapes and has shaped my perspective? With what voice do I share my perspective? What do I do with what I have found?" (Marshall & Rossman, 2011, p. 98).

An influence of the researcher's personal insight was recognized in the beginning phases of the study when a topic and overarching question were formulated. A background as a school administrator, as well as experience teaching in a university educational leadership program, created interest in the topic of emotional intelligence in school leaders. The interest was based on personal experiences in the field which resulted in the birthing of the Center for Social and Emotional Leadership, a new leadership training center owned and managed by the researcher. Those personal and professional experiences established the credibility of the researcher and also created bias in the study because they guided the formulation of the topic, purpose, design, methods, analysis, and conclusions.

By acknowledging this influence, the researcher attempted to remain neutral and capture the true essence of the experience of the participant's lived experience. Despite the researcher's awareness of the potential to influence the research through bias and the effort to bracket personal insight, some aspects of the study were likely influenced. The researcher attempted to remain neutral during the interviews with the recognition that each person would filter and respond to the interview questions differently based on their preexisting behaviors and beliefs. Another factor was the researcher's own ability or lack thereof to conduct the interviews in exactly the same way, conveying the same unbiased stance to each participant. The use of scripted interview questions aided in removing some of these biases.

The analysis of the data provided another opportunity for the researcher to bracket personal insight and attempt to view the data as if seeing it for the first time (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). The cognitive and affective processing required to analyze and synthesize

qualitative data for emerging themes implied a personal interpretation was part of the process, no matter how neutrally the researcher attempted to conduct the process. The researcher recognized this personal filter would be in place while analyzing the data. As data were organized into categories and coded for emerging themes, the researcher made a conscious effort to view the phenomenon emerging from the data from the participants' perspective.

These considerations and concerns regarding the role of the researcher in creating bias in the study were taken into account throughout the study, from its inception to the formulation of conclusions. Without doubt, the study was influenced by the researcher, who served as both the instrument of collection and measurement in the study (Creswell, 2009). A conscious effort was made by the researcher to capture the essence of the participants' perspectives in their unique settings from their individual lived experiences and schematic backgrounds of understanding.

Delimitations

The study of the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation was limited to participants from two Nazarene universities having educational leadership programs in principal preparation. The study was limited to this scope in order to specifically examine the phenomena related to the topics of the study from institutions with similar philosophical and conceptual approaches. Universities outside the Nazarene system were not included in order to avoid data which may have interfered with the ability to discover the truth of the phenomenon as it was experienced and expressed by participants. In addition, the roles of the participants were intentionally identified and chosen for the study based on their assumed expertise and background of experience in the topic of educational leadership. Within these parameters, the researcher sought to uncover and understand the essence of the phenomenon as it was expressed by the participants and through any artifacts they provided (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

Limitations

The uncontrolled limitations inherent to this study and contributed to bias were the researcher, the participants, the qualitative design of the study, the interview questions created by the researcher, and the time constraints of the study. The values, beliefs, personality, and intellectual filter of the researcher must be considered as part of the limits of the study. It is from this perspective that the researcher developed the design, conducted the data collection, analyzed for results, and formulated conclusions. The existing values, beliefs, and personalities of the subjects who participated in the study also defined limitations (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Through their unique perspectives and understandings, responses were given that generated the primary source of data for the study. Participant responses were gathered through interviews, which were conceptualized and written by the researcher. Though they were piloted with experts to establish validity, it is still important to recognize their limiting nature. Finally, the parameters created by the time constraints of the study created uncontrolled limits. This included not only the time limits and deadlines imposed by the doctoral program, but also the time limits of the participants. The tight schedules and limited availability of the university directors had a notable influence on the ability of the researcher to gather data in a timely manner in order to have ample time for completion of the study.

Chapter IV

Results

Introduction

This study explored the role of emotional intelligence and associated social and emotional skills in two principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system. The objective of the study was to provide insights regarding the awareness of the concepts and presence of curriculum in emotional intelligence and associated skills, as well as the perceived need for inclusion of instruction in emotional intelligence and any hindrances or solutions to incorporating such curriculum in the educational leadership programs of the two participating universities.

The findings of the study, in the form of qualitative data collected through in-depth interviews and an examination of program documents, were based on the following research questions:

1. Do the educational leadership courses currently offered in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system include the study of EI theory and related social and emotional skills of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation?
2. What is the level of understanding of the EI theory and its perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?
3. What is the level of understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation, and their perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?

4. Is there a perceived need to strengthen the inclusion of curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system?
5. What are the perceived hindrances and solutions to including curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system?

Results

Interview data were analyzed for emerging themes through a process of organizing the transcribed conversations into manageable units based around the research questions. A system of color coding the units was employed for the first round of analysis, followed by the development of letter codes made up of one to three letters and assigned to identify responses that began to emerge as themes across the data. The coded responses were then synthesized for patterns and themes in relation to the questions posed to guide the research. The representative letter codes were used in some of the tables and charts presented to explain the results. In addition, the confidentiality of the four participants and two universities involved in the study was maintained through the use of pseudonyms. The university directors who participated in the interviews were referred to as Participant 1 through Participant 4, or P1–P4, and the universities were referred to as University 1 and University 2. Course titles used in the results were modified in order to protect the identity of the universities, while at the same time retaining the meaning of the titles.

The analysis of the interview transcripts was supported by the review of several additional documents that were examined for information pertaining to the research questions. This was carried out in order to deepen the inquiry into the topic and strengthen the analysis and

induced conclusions. Included in this review were the conceptual frameworks from each university, the course listings and related descriptions from the educational leadership programs in both universities, and the demographic questionnaires completed by each participant in the study. The information gleaned from the interviews and additional documents provided by the participants encompassed the results of this study, presented under an abbreviated heading of each of the five research questions.

Presence of EI theory and associated skills in existing curriculum. The data revealed an absence of specific curriculum in EI theory and associated social and emotional skills in the existing principal preparation programs in both universities. The interview responses did, however, result in the emergence of a consistent belief among the participants that some of the concepts of the EI theory and associated skills were embedded or implied in the current curriculum. The following statements by participants were typical of this theme.

- Participant 1: "I don't think it is. I would think it would be. I think it is embedded."
- Participant 2: "It's embedded in the curriculum. I saw it this week in a class...where students were doing a presentation about leadership."
- Participant 3: "Well, we have some. Most of it is embedded."
- Participant 4: "Basically, for 20 years we have approached these issues because I think they are timeless. You could always be looking for the newest guru, or whatever...I think...understanding who you are is timeless."

In addition to an analysis of the interview transcripts, an examination of course listings and related descriptions offered in each program was conducted. This revealed the presence of no specific mention or presence of EI theory in the existing curriculum, but several of the course

descriptions suggested that some aspects of the concepts of emotional intelligence may be presented through the topics being taught.

Table 1

Course titles and summaries of content in current principal preparation programs in two Nazarene universities—University 1.

University 1

Course Title	Summary of Course Contents
Concepts of Leadership	Developing an understanding of the concept of leadership; **ability to guide people**; decision making; **interpersonal skills;** organizational ability and **communication**
Research in Education	Principles, methods, and techniques of research; interpretation, evaluation, and use of research; introduction to reporting techniques
Planning and Evaluating Curriculum and Instruction	Planning curriculum around occupational trends and lifelong learning needs of students; evaluation of curriculum and instruction programs in schools
Managing Human Resources	Human relations and adjustment in the school environment; evaluation, **interpersonal relationships**, and **employee motivation** problems
Education Law	Understanding of legal responsibilities of school leader, procedure and policy implementation to meet legal requirements; public and private legal issues in Education
Finance in Schools	Understanding of local, state, and federal finance for schools; attention to budgets and tax bases
Long-Range School Planning	Nature of long-range planning; development and implementation of a vision statement; needs of local schools; staffing, technology, facilities, and student support
Education and School Administration	Development of education in U.S.— historical and contemporary; forces behind current educational agenda; **role of principal/superintendent—theoretical** and practical
Community and School Relations	Understanding of need and responsibilities of public and private sectors related to education; skills for building community support for district priorities and policies
Responding to Diversity	**Understanding of diversity** in local community and school's response; promoting value of local school and community cultures; sociology of cultures
Internship	Practical aspects of programs in administrative career; school finance, legal aspects, facilities, and **personnel**

Table 2

Course titles and summaries of content in current principal preparation programs in two Nazarene universities—University 2.

University 2

Course Title	Summary of Course Contents
Field Experience I–IV	Development of personal mission; familiarization of school governance and duties; employment practices; **sound decision making**; leading professional development; **organizational climate;** curriculum, assessment, and best practices; legal, ethical, financial, and political context; instructional and school improvement; diversity
Leading Effective Instruction	Administration, management, and **leadership;** government roles; duties of various administrators and boards, current issues—standards and student achievement; historical perspective of education; professional goals and mission
Technology for Leaders	Managing and supporting technology to increase student learning and school efficiency; models of technology to support teaching, students, and parents
Leading Decisions to Improve Instruction	Organizational mission, strategic planning, core beliefs in school; establishing a vision, **a sense of community,** and developing **positive learning culture** toward student achievement; **models of effective leaders**; teacher recruitment
Research and Data to Improve Learning	Use research to improve learning; student learning; effective teaching; community resources for students; problem and data analysis and interpretation, student growth and academic development; leaders as consumers of data
Leading Curriculum and Instruction	Research, assessment, and other data, standards and best practices to guide leadership of instructional program; local, state, and federal requirements of methods and processes for implementation of programs
Ethics, Law, and Politics	Legal and regulatory mandates—district, state, federal, and courts; rights and responsibilities of teachers, administration, and students; political influences, moral and ethical responsibilities of schools; special education laws; school finance
Importance of Diversity	How diversity affects education locally, nationally, and globally; **responding to diversity** to improve instruction, **learning, and school climate;** ethnicity/race, gender, religion, socioeconomics, exceptionality, demographics, language
Assessing Learning	Principles, strategies, and techniques of organizational effectiveness and student learning; characteristics of effective learning organizations; knowledge, skills, **attitudes**, and **dispositions** needed to lead school to increased student learning
Summative Seminar	Creation of school improvement plan through interpretation and analysis of school data; presentation to panel of professional educators

The above course listings and descriptions do not name the EI theory or the related social and emotional skills of mindfulness, compassion, or emotion regulation specifically; however, the content reveals possible areas in which the theory and concepts could be embedded in or implied through the curriculum content as indicated by boldface type.

A further analysis of the interview data resulted in the identification of topics related to leadership theory currently presented in the principal preparation programs in the two universities. The following list revealed the leadership theory course topics shared by participants.

- **Philosophy of leadership**
- **Leadership paradigms**
- Practical approaches to leadership
- Leadership theory—realism, ideals, pragmatism
- **Servant leadership**
- Management
- Instructional leadership
- **Empathy and understanding** for effective leadership
- Leadership styles—**transformational**, situational, **servant leadership**
- **Building an effective culture and climate**
- Efficacy building

Course topics from the previous list related to emotional intelligence and related skills are highlighted in boldface type. These topics corresponded with and support the highlighted course descriptions and confirmed the participants' statements indicating a perception that some aspects of the EI theory and associated skills were embedded or implied in the current curriculum. A

summary view of the course descriptions and topics was facilitated by classifying the topics into like groups. The result was a list of overarching themes of course topics taught in the universities more clearly correlated to the EI theory.

Table 3

Summary themes from courses and topics taught in principal preparation programs of participant universities and corresponding domains from Goleman's EI theory.

Themes of Topics and Courses Taught	EI Domain
The ability to guide, motivate, and communicate with people	Relationship and Self-Management
The ability to understand people and their unique needs	Social Awareness
The ability to build and shape the culture and climate	Social Awareness, Relationship Management, Self-Management
The ability to understand one's role as a leader	Self-Awareness

Understanding of EI theory and relationship to principal leadership. The probing into the data for this research question required the analysis of responses to questions 3 and 4 of the interview. Question 3 specifically addressed the participants' background knowledge and understanding of the EI theory, while question 4 sought to understand the participants' perspective of emotional intelligence as it related to school leadership. The results for this inquiry were presented in two distinct sections identified with subheadings.

Background knowledge and understanding of EI theory. All four participants expressed a lack of background knowledge and understanding of the EI theory. During the interview, participants were given a brief description of the EI theory used based on Daniel Goleman's definition. The definition and four domains identified by Goleman (2011) as characteristic of effective leaders were reviewed verbally with the participants who had also received a written copy of the interview questions that contained the information. The four domains in Goleman's

EI model were (a) self-awareness, (b) self-management, (c) social awareness, and (d) relationship management.

After the definition of the theory was provided, participants were asked the following interview question: How would you describe your background knowledge and level of understanding of this theory? Describe specific experiences from conferences, workshops, readings, formal courses, a doctoral student, etc.

Similar responses were received from each participant as seen in the following representative statements:

- Participant 1: "Well, I had no background knowledge of it."
- Participant 2: "You know, sad to say, I'm not familiar with Goleman's theory."
- Participant 3: " ...to be perfectly honest, I've not heard the term emotional intelligence equated into leadership programs until you brought it to mind. I've not been to and don't know that I've even been offered the opportunity or been made aware of any workshops for emotional intelligence as far as educational leadership programs."
- Participant 4: "You know, I understand the terms, I don't understand theory."

Relationship of emotional intelligence to principal leadership. Despite the participants' absence of knowledge and understanding of EI theory, the subsequent question regarding their perspective EI was presented in the interview regarding how it relates to school leadership. Responses were easily grouped into emerging themes and illustrated the Nazarene directors' perspective of the relationship of emotional intelligence to school leadership. The responses came from the following interview question: I am also interested in your perspective of emotional intelligence as it relates to school leadership. How would you describe your perception of the relationship between principal leadership and emotional intelligence, if any?

Table 4

Participant Responses to the Relationship of Emotional Intelligence to School Leadership

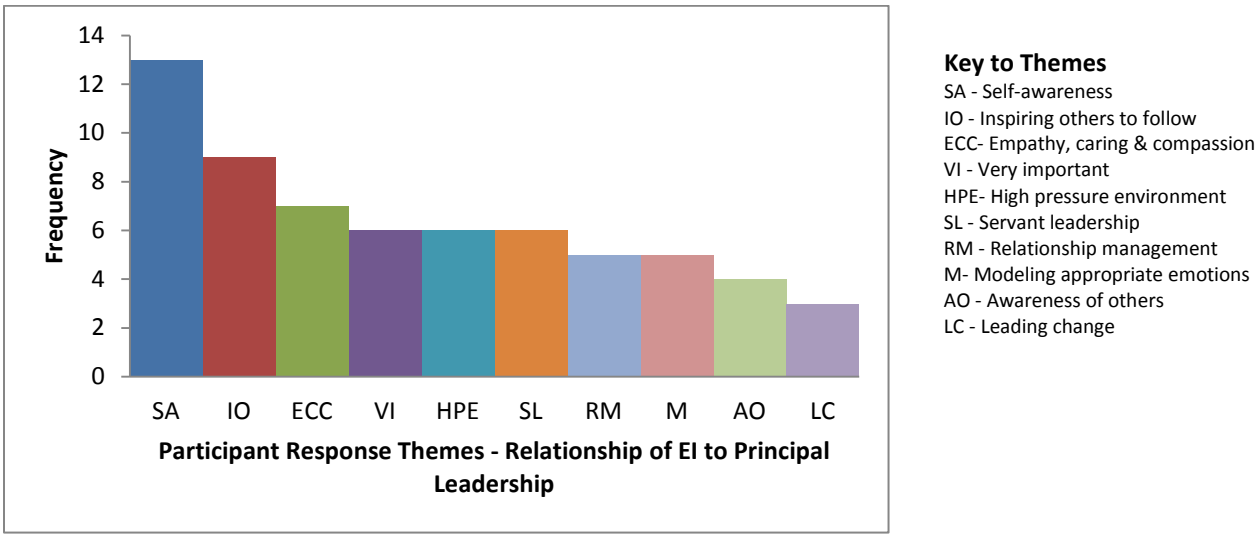
Responses—Relationship of Emotional Intelligence to Principal Leadership	Code	Frequency
EI is very important to effective school leadership.	**VI**	**6**
Self-awareness is a necessary skill for school leaders.	**SA**	**13**
Relationship management is an important part of school leadership.	**RM**	**5**
Principals/leaders should model appropriate emotions and behaviors.	**M**	**5**
Inspiring others to follow and do their best work requires EI.	**IO**	**9**
Awareness of others helps school leaders do their work well.	**AO**	**4**
The existing high pressure educational environment requires EI leaders.	**HPE**	**6**
It is important for principals to convey empathy, or care, or compassion.	**ECC**	**7**
EI leaders act with the characteristics of a servant leader.	**SL**	**4**
The need to lead positive change and school improvement requires EI.	**LC**	**3**

Note. EI = emotional intelligence.

The table shows 10 different themes generated from the Nazarene directors' responses, indicating there is a perceived relationship between emotional intelligence and principal leadership. The data are further organized in Figure 4 to illustrate the frequency of the different themes. It can be deduced that the more often a response is given, the stronger the relationship to emotional intelligence the theme is perceived to exist.

Figure 4

Frequency of participants' responses regarding relationship of emotional intelligence to principal leadership. Responses are coded as themes.



The results of this portion of the study showed a perceived relationship between emotional intelligence and principal leadership. The frequency revealed eight of the 10 themes resulted in responses that exceeded the number of participants, indicating themes were derived from multiple similar responses by participants. *Self-awareness* and *inspiring others to follow* rose above the rest of the data and suggest a high level of perceived relationship between these leadership behaviors and emotional intelligence. To further understand the context of the respondents' perspective on this, the following examples of interview responses were classified under these two themes.

1. Examples of responses regarding self-awareness:
    - "You have to know who you are and what's meaningful to you."
    - "You know, it's self-awareness."
    - "You have to know when, as a principal, you can push and when you can't."
2. Examples of responses regarding influencing others:

- “It has to do with being able to get their teachers to follow them and go in the direction that…to turn the school around.”
- “It’s that ability to get them to buy in.”
- “Knowing that what you are doing is affecting them.”

Understanding of concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation, and relationship to principal leadership. The three interview questions used to explore the participants' understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation and their relationship to principal leadership were preceded with an explanation of their inclusion in the study along with the definitions of these concepts used for the purposes of the study. The explanation was given verbally, and participants were able to refer to the written copy of the interview transcript sent before the interviews. The interview questions following the explanation were:

- First, let's talk about the notion of "mindfulness." How would you describe your level of understanding of the concept of mindfulness and its implications for school leaders? (Describe specific experiences from your work, conferences, workshops, readings, formal courses, a doctoral student, etc...asked after each question.)
- I am also interested in your understanding of the concept of "compassion." How would you describe hour level of understanding and application of compassion for school principals?
- Let's consider "emotion regulation." How would you describe your level of understanding and use of emotion regulation by school administrators?"

The questions were asked separately for each topic but worded nearly the same, seeking the same type of information for each of the three concepts. This allowed for a side-by-side

comparison of the responses and a grouping of the data in a chart representing the responses about the concepts and their relation to school leaders. The results indicated understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation, and the implications for school leaders. The responses varied between participants, so the frequency of responses was not considered. However, as the analysis of the data was carried out, four general themes began to emerge similar to the four themes identified in the first research question regarding the presence of EI theory in the topics and courses taught in the university programs. The four primary themes used to categorize the responses were previously coupled with the four domains of Goleman's EI theory in order to illustrate the relationship of the responses to emotional intelligence (see Table 3). The themes identified in the prior analysis and applied again for this set of data were:

- The ability to guide, motivate and communicate with people
- The ability to understand people and their unique needs
- The ability to build and shape the culture and climate
- The ability to understand one's role as a leader

The participant responses were grouped as short phrases under these four themes with the original wording of the responses maintained, or only slightly revised, to preserve the integrity of the results.

Table 5

Participant responses showing collective understanding of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation and implications for school leaders.

Mindfulness	Compassion	Emotion Regulation
Theme 1: The ability to guide, motivate and communicate with people		
– build rapport to motivate teachers to be successful – focused on listening – talking instead of emails – answering questions – stop what you are doing – giving your time & attention	– providing support, coaching, or direction – interact with to know them – if a teacher feels you have compassion...scores will come along – it's a team effort	– know how your behavior affects theirs – not sitting behind your desk; communicating for a win-win – important for the hard discussions with teachers
Theme 2: The ability to understand people and their unique needs		
– have to know where they are – understanding skills, abilities, interests and willingness – pay attention to the needs of followers – understanding what they're trying to say, verbally or not	– it's about the whole child & the whole teacher – need to get wrapped up in their lives and know the kids – understanding where they are and their circumstances – empathizing with people	– setting aside emotions to see their perspective – to know what can be fixed and what cannot – I wonder how much of it is a gift people have
Theme 3: The ability to build and shape the culture and climate		
– bringing it to a personal level – being listened to as a leader – people feel they are heard – focused on what's happening – paying attention & moving in a different direction if needed	– it's about building relationships – It's ethics...treat others as you want to be treated" – conveying that it's more important than testing – having a wonderful workplace; test scores will come along	– affects decision-making & problem solving – means you make a thoughtful decision – not make emotional decisions in spur of moment
Theme 4: The ability to understand one's role as a leader		
– to know what you need to do as a leader – having "with-it-ness" – listening to your own emotions to guide you – not being reactionary to what's going on – logic doesn't always get you the desired result	– important to maintain a professional role – caring with balance – it's a tight rope walk – not feeling like you have to solve the world's problems – understand why they have regressed and adjust leadership	– the leader has to be in touch with their emotions – need to display confidence, be calm in tough situations – remain calm and cool; if you lose your cool, they will lose theirs – understand your emotional makeup

Reviewing the relationship of EI to the themes was useful in relating the results back to the purpose of the study, which explored the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation in the Nazarene university system. All four of the EI domains were represented by the themes that emerged from the participants' responses expressing their understanding and perception of the relationship between principal leadership and the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation. This confirmed the concepts were indeed related to emotional intelligence and more implicitly, that the concepts were related to skills, abilities, knowledge, and behaviors associated with principal leadership as perceived by the participants.

Need to strengthen inclusion of EI theory and concepts in programs. Near the end of the initial interview, participants were posed with a question regarding their perception of the need to strengthen the inclusion of curriculum in emotional intelligence and the associated skills of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation in their principal preparation programs. There was, in general, a perception that strengthening the inclusion of the concepts in their programs was needed. Their responses to this question were succinct, and the following examples illustrate the overall response of the group of Nazarene directors.

- Participant 1: "I would love to, but we would have to figure out how to do it and how to prove the worthiness of implementing that into the program."
- Participant 2: "I think it'd be very valuable as long as you could show that practical approach along with it...how it's applied out there in the trenches every day as a school leader."
- Participant 3: "There is a need to (include it) because that's one thing I believe will cause you to lose your position as a principal...your inability to relate to the teachers and get them on board."

- Participant 4: “Probably...those new administrators going out into the field need a wider understanding of what's out there."

From such participant responses, four distinct themes were derived as conditions of, or rationale for, strengthening the inclusion of the topics in the existing curriculum. For clarity, the phrases were preceded by the leading statement:

We should strengthen inclusion of curriculum in EI and associated skills...

- Participant 1: ...but the worthiness of it would have to be proven.
- Participant 2: ...if the practical approach of how to apply it could be included.
- Participant 3: ...because principals need to learn how to relate to and effectively lead teachers.
- Participant 4: ...because new principals need a broader understanding of leadership for their work.

The result was a set of four distinct themes:

- Prove the value of
- Include a practical approach
- Needed for effective leadership
- Needed for new principals

The themes point to the design and intent of curriculum in university principal preparation programs designed to provide valuable and practical instruction in effective leadership for aspiring principals. The themes also indicate the need for university directors to justify the inclusion of new curriculum in their existing programs. This segued to the results of the final research question, which addressed the obstacles and possible solutions to including

new curriculum in emotional intelligence and associated concepts in the participants' current principal preparation programs.

Hindrances and solutions to including EI theory and concepts in programs. To complete the study of the role of emotional intelligence in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system, an investigation of the perceived barriers to incorporating the concepts in the participants' programs of study, along with any solutions to overcoming the barriers, was carried out. The following interview questions provided a prompt for the participants' thoughts on the topic: Let's talk about hindrances to incorporating these concepts into your leadership curriculum. What are the specific roadblocks or challenges which hinder the inclusion of these concepts in your principal preparation program? How about solutions to overcoming these challenges?

As would be expected of educational experts, the university directors provided insightful responses regarding hindrances and solutions based on their roles as program administrators. Their responses indicated a realistic view of both the need to work within the context of their established programs, as well as the need to meet expectations outside of their control that create accountability for the universities. At the same time, they expressed some ideological beliefs reflecting the desire to provide principals with training in the more human aspects of their work. These juxtaposed perspectives set the stage for a wide range of responses regarding the hindrances to including EI theory and related concepts in the principal preparation programs, as well as some potential solutions.

Important themes emerged from the data that provide some insight into the parameters of the principal preparation programs and potential ways of working within the boundaries to find solutions to the barriers that were identified by the participants. The responses were taken

directly from the interview transcripts, and redaction did not change the meaning of the responses.

Table 6

Perceived hindrances to including EI theory and concepts in principal preparation programs of participants. Five emerging themes resulted.

Responses to Hindrances	Summary	Theme
• *The biggest hindrance is the pressure …it's all about tests.* • *We have to prove what we are covering.* • *It's believed the principal is the one who is going to change the scores in the most dire neighborhoods...so it's a dilemma that is definitely a hindrance for us.*	University programs are under pressure to produce principals who can improve student achievement.	**Pressure and accountability to produce**
• *The push is to turn principals out, get them hired, get them performing and improving skills.*	The current focus is on performance and less on the human aspects of school leadership.	**Focus is on performance not people**
• *The humanistic component is missing… missing too in our society… it's becoming less about people being empathetic.* • *People would view it critically and say we don't have time for this feel good stuff…we need to get the job done.*	There is a need to address practical aspects of the work.	**Practical application is important**
• *Our program is advertised as having a practical nature, so finding someone with a good understanding of this to be able to transmit it to students is a hindrance.*	Expert knowledge of the topic is needed in order to provide practical application to students. Can it be taught?	**Lack of knowledge of the concepts**
• *I wonder if it can really be taught, or if it is something leaders just have innately.* • *You can get bogged down in what is constantly changing…a new theory or approach or concept.* • *You could always be looking for the newest guru…you have to find one that has a proven track record.*	Is the theory credible, proven, and useful?	**Need to prove credibility & worth**

The five main themes that emerged from the analysis of the perceived hindrances indicate barriers, including both pragmatics and perception that would need to be addressed in order for emotional intelligence and related concepts to be included in the principal preparation programs in the two universities. The five themes which emerged are (a) pressure and accountability to produce; (b) focus is on performance not people; (c) practical application is important; (d) lack of knowledge of the concepts; and (e) need to prove credibility and worth.

The solutions presented by participants in their responses to ways they might overcome the identified hindrances resulted in some suggestions that address some, but not all, of the barriers identified. The suggested solutions were more pragmatic in nature.

Table 7

Perceived solutions to including EI in existing principal preparation programs.

Responses to Solutions	Summary	Theme
• You've got to embed it. • Make it a part of the discussions. • Make it a part of your mission…this is the way we do things around here. • The way to get EI in is to embed it. • Maybe put a component of it in existing coursework	Embed the concepts in the existing curriculum and make part of university expectations	**Embed it in the university programs**
• We have a course that deals with sociology, culture, and community; maybe that would be a good place to embed it.	Work it into existing courses; find a place for practical application of it	**Embed it in existing courses**
• We do have two courses that it could be worked into—a leadership course and a practical approach course. • I've often though an ed. psych course would be helpful….or one in behavioral science for principal preparation. These would be a good place to include it.	Develop or add a new course to include it in	**Create new course**
• Having somebody that is not an educational leader teach the course • Maybe a learning specialist or someone who's studied this in business leadership	Bring in outside experts to teach it	**Use outside experts**
• Emphasize servant leadership—this would go right along with that. • I'd like to see servant leadership strengthened in the curriculum...we have a corner on the market for it.	Use servant leadership as a vehicle to deliver the concepts	**Teach through servant leadership**

The responses to solutions for including EI theory and related concepts in the existing principal preparation programs in the two universities also resulted in the identification of five themes: (a) Embed it in the university programs; (b) embed it in existing courses; (c) create new courses; (d) use outside experts; and (e) teach through servant leadership. As mentioned, the themes carry a more pragmatic tone with practical suggestions for actions or approaches that could be employed by the universities to incorporate the EI concepts into their programs.

The results of the study have been presented in relation to the research questions, which were designed to provide insight regarding the awareness of the concepts and presence of curriculum in emotional intelligence and associated skills in the educational leadership programs of the two participating universities. In addition, the perceived need for inclusion and any hindrances or solutions to incorporating such curriculum in the programs was vetted through an in-depth analysis of the data.

A summary of the results, along with a discussion of conclusions and implications of the findings will be presented in Chapter 5.

Chapter V

Discussion

Introduction

This qualitative study investigated the role of emotional intelligence and related concepts in the principal preparation programs in two universities belonging to the Nazarene university system in the United States. The conclusions drawn from the results were discussed in terms of their application to the principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system as a whole, as well as the potential for their generalization to the broader body of university principal preparation programs and in-service training programs for current school leaders.

The rationale for providing training in emotional intelligence for school leaders was based on the research proving the influence of principals on student achievement (Marzano et al., 2005), as well as the research showing a relationship between emotionally intelligent leaders and organizational success (Fullan, 2008; Goleman, 2011; McKee et al., 2008). Principals, who communicate well with teachers and develop an emotionally supportive culture and climate based on trusting relationships, create an environment conducive to optimal learning (The College Board, 2006; Fullan, 2008; McKee, 2008; Noe, 2012; Price, 2012). The result is a higher job satisfaction, improved teacher performance and increased student achievement (Church, 2009; DeRoberto, 2011; Hebert, 2011). The key to creating these conditions is to provide much needed training in emotional intelligence for school leaders (Hebert, 2011; Mills, 2009; Sanders & Johnson, 2009; Stone et al., 2005).

From this perspective, the qualitative investigation explored the understanding and presence of curriculum in emotional intelligence and associated skills, as well as the perceived need, hindrances, and solutions to including such curriculum in two principal preparation

programs in the Nazarene university system. The investigation involved the collection of data through semi structured interviews conducted with education department heads from the two universities. The interview transcripts along with information gleaned from principal preparation program course descriptions, provided the qualitative data for the analysis and subsequent vetting for results presented in Chapter 4. A summary of the results provides the foundation for the conclusions, recommendations, and implications.

Summary of Results

The analysis of the interview data was guided by the research questions and, therefore, resulted in a collection of themes that emerged in relation to the topics examined through the questions. A review of results generated the following summary of themes and results for each question.

Research question 1. *Do the educational leadership courses currently offered in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system include the study of EI theory and related social and emotional skills of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation?*

Results.

- The data revealed an absence of specific curriculum in EI theory and associated skills in the principal preparation programs of both universities.
- EI was embedded to some extent in current curriculum.

Though no specific naming of EI theory was identified in the university curriculum for principal preparation, participants expressed the belief that some aspects of the theory were present in the current course of study. The four themes which emerge from the exploration of the course topics and descriptions from both universities' programs of study resulted in four overarching themes. The themes were correlated with Goleman's four domains of emotional

intelligence, which showed that all four domains were represented by one or more of the four course topic themes.

- Themes representing EI theory from course topics in university programs:
  - The ability to guide, motivate, and communicate with people
  - The ability to understand people and their unique needs
  - The ability to build and shape the culture and climate
  - The ability to understand one's role as a leader

Research question 2*. What is the level of understanding of the EI theory and its perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?*

Results (part 1)—level of understanding. None of the four participants had background knowledge or understanding of the EI theory.

Results (part 2)—perceived relationship to principal leadership. The data resulted in 10 themes that revealed participants' perception of the relationship of EI theory to principal leadership. The 10 themes and the frequency for each theme were:

1. Self-awareness is a necessary skills for school leaders—13.
2. Inspiring others to follow and do their best work requires EI—9.
3. It is important for principals to convey empathy, care, or compassion—7.
4. EI is very important to effective school leadership—6.
5. The existing high pressure educational environment requires EI—6.
6. Relationship management is an important part of school leadership—5.
7. Principals and leaders should model appropriate emotions and behaviors—5.
8. Awareness of others helps school leaders do their work well—4.

9. EI leaders act with the characteristics of a servant leader—4.

10. The need to lead positive change and school improvement requires EI—3.

Research question 3*. What is the level of understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation, and their perceived relationship to principal leadership as expressed by directors of educational leadership programs in the Nazarene university system?*

Results (part 1). The data resulted in a wide variety of responses that indicated the university directors had a high level of understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation.

Results (**part 2).** An analysis of the responses regarding the participants' perception of the relationship of the three concepts to principal leadership resulted in the emergence of the same four themes, which emerged in response to question 1. The responses from Question 3 were grouped under each of the themes to illustrate how the responses were classified with the themes. The themes were correlated to Goleman's EI theory, showing how each theme represented one or more of the domains of his theory. The results suggested a common thematic thread of leadership abilities related to emotional intelligence extending from the current coursework offered by the universities to the participants' perception of the relationship between three EI-related concepts to principal leadership.

- The ability to guide, motivate and communicate with people
- The ability to understand people and their unique needs
- The ability to build and shape the culture and climate
- The ability to understand one's role as a leader

Research question 4. *Is there a perceived need to strengthen the inclusion of curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system?*

Results. A need for strengthening the inclusion of EI curriculum and associated concepts in the principal preparation programs of the two Nazarene universities was expressed. The perceived need was unanimous, but each participant expressed a different condition or rationale for doing so. These emerged as themes that could be used as guidelines for the development and implementation of any such curriculum. The themes which emerged were:

1. Prove the value of
2. Include a practical approach
3. Needed for effective leadership
4. Needed for new principals

Research question 5. *What are the perceived hindrances and solutions to including curriculum in the EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs in the Nazarene university system*?

Results. The analysis resulted in five themes each for the two topics explored.

Table 8

Perceived Hindrances and Solutions to the Inclusion of EI Theory in Programs

Hindrances	Solutions
Pressure and accountability to produce	Embed in university programs
Focus is on performance, not people	Embed in existing courses
Practical application is important	Create a new course
Lack of knowledge of the concepts	Use outside experts
Need to prove credibility and worth	Teach through servant leadership

The hindrances identified by participants indicated both the limits imposed on existing programs and educators to meet certain expectations and also the limits created by the lack of understanding of EI theory or the need to address potential negative responses to including EI in the universities' principal preparation programs. In line with the perceived hindrances, the themes developed from the participants' responses to solutions revealed a variety of suggestions for including curriculum in EI theory within the parameters of or in reaction to the hindrances. Embedding EI instruction in current curriculum, including using the currently taught topic of servant leadership as an in road for teaching EI theory, was suggested, along with the idea of creating an entirely new course or bringing in an outside expert to teach the EI portion of the curriculum.

In summary, the results of the study revealed an absence of specific curriculum in EI theory and associated concepts in the two principal preparation programs, as well as a lack of background knowledge and understanding of EI theory by the university program directors. In contrast, the results revealed a high level of understanding of the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation as expressed by the participants.

The perceived relationship of EI theory to principal leadership resulted in 10 themes, which illustrated the participants' recognition of the association between principal leadership and emotional competence. The participants also recognized the importance of the relationship between principal leadership and the concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation. This was expressed by a variety of examples of the ways in which the three concepts are manifest through principal leadership.

The examples shared were grouped under four general themes of leadership ability, which had initially emerged during an analysis of the course topics and descriptions offered by the

universities in their principal preparation programs. The ability to guide, motivate, and communicate with people, to understand their unique needs, to build and shape the culture and climate, and to understand one's role as a leader were the themes identified. These themes were also analyzed in relation to Goleman's four EI theory domains, which resulted in an identification of the presence of one or more of the domains in each of the leader ability themes generated from the results.

Finally, the university program directors unanimously expressed a need for the inclusion of EI theory in their principal preparation programs. Four themes for including the curriculum emerged from the responses: (a) prove the value of it; (b) include a practical approach; (c) needed for effective leadership; and (d) needed for new principals. Parameters and guidelines for developing and implementing EI curriculum in the university's programs resulted from the analysis of the responses regarding hindrances and solutions to the inclusion of such curriculum. Five themes expressed as barriers and five themes expressed as solutions suggested the need to work within the parameters of the existing programs, as well as consider novel ways to offer EI curriculum to students in their programs.

Conclusions

This study began from an awareness of the important role of emotion in the day-to-day work of school leaders in their efforts to lead change within the context of a high pressure educational environment (The College Board, 2006; DeRoberto, 2011; Hebert, 2011). Important connections were found between the establishment of trusting relationships, effective communication in the work place and success in the organization (Boyatzis et al., 2006; Czech & Forward, 2010; Goleman, 2011; Gordon, 2001; McKee, 2008; Newberg & Waldman, 2012). The research review also showed that individuals who lead with the characteristics of a servant leader

are more likely to develop positive leader-follower relationships and successfully help people in the organization grow to their fullest potential (McCuddy & Cavin, 2008; Spears, 2010). Leaders who are competent in self-awareness and social awareness and who manage themselves and relationships well, were shown to be successful leaders (Church, 2009; Goleman, 2011; Yamamoto, 2010). These four areas of competence create the foundation for Daniel Goleman's (2011) EI theory, which established a starting point for the theoretical framework of the study. A further examination of the literature resulted in the discovery of current findings in affective neuroscience, which support the development of competence in emotional intelligence. Studies show training in mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation can enhance emotional intelligence and, therefore, enhance leader effectiveness (Davidson & Begley, 2013; Goleman & Davidson, 2012; Marturano, 2010; Neff & Germer, 2012; Tipsord, 2009; Van Dodson-LaVelle, 2013). The literature review culminated with an investigation of the research associated with principal effectiveness in relation to training in emotional intelligence. The importance and value of such training surfaced, as well as the recommendation for providing training in emotional intelligence and associated skills in university principal preparation programs and in-service training for existing principals (Hebert, 2011; Sanders & Johnson, 2009; Stone et al., 2005).

From the researcher's professional perspective as an experienced school administrator, as well as experience as an instructor in a university program in educational leadership, the awareness of the lack in training in emotional intelligence for school leaders rose to the surface as a concern. This concern coupled with the research and associated theories presented in the review of the literature provided the rationale for exploring the role of EI theory and associated skills in principal preparation programs and for determining the potential for including such curriculum in future programs of study.

The overall purpose of the study was to explore the understanding, presence, application, and potential future use of emotional intelligence curriculum in school leader preparation. A narrow scope using a phenomenological, qualitative design for the study was determined as a useful approach to meeting the purpose, so the participant pool was limited to four program directors in two universities in the Nazarene university system. In-depth interviews were employed in order closely investigate the phenomena as it existed in the two university programs studied. The interviews generated a collection of data which was analyzed to reveal the results summarized above.

The results indicate a need for the inclusion of specific curriculum in emotional intelligence in the principal preparation programs of the two Nazarene universities in the study. The Nazarene program directors did not possess background knowledge in the EI theory, but when asked to explain their perception of EI theory, and the associated concepts of mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation to principal leadership, they produced a wealth of responses. The responses represented principal attributes, behaviors, and qualities that were are descriptive of the social and emotional competencies identified under Goleman's four domains in his EI theory: self-awareness, social awareness, self-management, and relationship management.

The most prevalent theme that emerged from the participants' perceived relationship of EI theory to principal leadership was self-awareness. As noted in the literature review, Goleman (2011) emphasized self-awareness as critical for leaders suggesting, leaders who are self-aware make rational decisions because they have a deep understanding of their strengths, emotions, weaknesses, needs, and drives which allows them to avoid problems when making decisions. He also emphasized the importance of self-awareness in building relationships and communicating

with others. Building caring relationships as a leader was linked in the research to effective leadership and to the development of a caring work place environment.

Skills in relationship building and communication were likewise identified by the university directors in their responses, as was the ability to influence the culture and climate of the school. Four main themes emerged from the analysis of the participants' responses regarding the relationship between principal leadership and EI theory and associated concepts and also from the examination of topics currently taught in the universities' principal preparation programs. The four themes were correlated to Goleman's four domains of EI theory, showing the presence of emotional intelligence within the themes. The themes encapsulate the important leader qualities highlighted by both the directors and the research reviewed. In particular, the propensity to self-awareness, effective communication, and the building of culture and relationships were expressed. To summarize, the ability to guide, motivate, communicate, understand people and their unique needs, to build and shape culture and climate, and to understand one's role as a leader, is indelible to school leadership and manifest in many ways through the social and emotional skills associated with emotional intelligence.

Another important result which surfaced from the study was the need for inclusion of EI curriculum in the university principal preparation programs. The perception of the need was unanimous; however, along with the need, some rationale and conditions for including it were expressed. The rationale was that it was 1) needed for new principals, and 2) also needed for effective leadership. This suggests that including EI curriculum in the universities' principal preparation programs could easily be justified. The conditions presented by the university directors for including the EI curriculum in their programs were 1) the need to prove the value of it, and 2) to include a practical approach to the application of the curriculum for aspiring

principals. This suggests the universities would benefit from EI curriculum developed from sound research, which should be approved by the universities or published by a reputable educational curriculum publisher. It would also need to be provided in a format that allowed for instruction and student engagement in the curriculum in a practical, rather than theoretical, way. These rationale and conditions can be viewed as helpful guidelines for developing and implementing EI curriculum in the Nazarene universities' principal preparation programs.

The perceived hindrances and solutions to including such curriculum were revealed in the final section of the analysis, which resulted in a list of five barriers and five solutions. From these lists, two main conclusions about the most helpful EI aspects to including the curriculum can be drawn: (a) Incorporating or embedding EI curriculum into existing courses and program components where appropriate would be helpful; (b) considering novel ways of bringing EI curriculum to students or to the programs when appropriate would be helpful. This suggests an examination of the current programs would be appropriate in order to capitalize on what is already established. In the event novel approaches are needed, experts from existing programs in the universities, such as business management professors, could be resourced as well as professionals versed in EI theory from organizations outside the university setting.

The study as a whole provided an in-depth examination of the role of emotional intelligence in school leader preparation in two universities in the Nazarene university system. From the results of the qualitative investigation, conclusions were drawn that justify the need for the inclusion of curriculum in emotional intelligence and associated concepts in the universities' principal preparation programs. The results also provided conclusions about the best ways to develop and deliver the curriculum and the most effective ways to incorporate it into the programs.

From this point, conclusions can be extended to consider a wider range of implications for professional practice and recommendations for further research.

Implications for Professional Practice

The eight regional universities making up the Nazarene university system in the United States fall under the auspices of the Church of the Nazarene and the Wesleyan-holiness tradition of Christian belief. The value of education is held high in the Church of the Nazarene, and as a result, higher education institutions of learning have been established worldwide (Church of the Nazarene, 2013). The importance of education is exemplified through the Nazarene universities' strong academic programs of study in education, several of which offer graduate programs in educational leadership. Northwest Nazarene university is one of the universities in the system to offer a program in school leader preparation, and as such, was likened to the participant universities. A common set of Christian values and ideals as institutions under the Church of the Nazarene strengthened the similarity of the three universities as did the recognition of a common set of accreditation standards met by all of the universities. Both of the participant universities and Northwest Nazarene were accredited by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2001) which established standards for undergraduate and graduate programs in the preparation of teachers and other school professionals.

The commonalities between the universities provided a pathway for extending the results of the study to Northwest Nazarene University's (NNU) program in principal preparation. The principal preparation program at NNU was not closely examined, like the programs of the participant universities were, but an overview of the university's mission and goals revealed a connection to the concepts covered in the study. The mission read as follows:

> The mission of Northwest Nazarene University is the transformation of the whole person. Centered in Jesus Christ, the NNU education instills habits of heart, soul, mind and strength to enable each student to become God's creative and redemptive agent in the world (Northwest Nazarene University, 2014, para.1).

EI theory and the associated concepts of mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation were aligned with the habits of heart, soul, mind and strength at the core of NNU's mission statement. The result was a recognition by the researcher that the university's central goals represented an embodiment of the concepts through the development of the heart, soul, mind and strength of each student preparing for work as a school leader. To lead from the heart, soul and mind, with self- awareness and awareness of others in order to manage relationships and one's self, and guided by an inner strength girded in mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation, is to be an emotionally intelligent leader.

Another common thread present in each of the three universities' core principles was the concept of service, more specifically addressed as servant leadership in the principal preparation programs. Shared by the participants as one of the ten main themes relating EI to principal leadership, servant leadership surfaced as an important aspect of leadership development in the universities. An examination of NNU's current focus on servant leadership throughout the university and specifically guided by the Office of Leadership Studies and Servant Leadership in the Wesley Center, suggested the potential to integrate the principles of EI and servant leadership into the existing principal preparation program. A comparative study of both perspectives was suggested in order to maintain the components and practical implications of EI separate from the broader context of the study of servant leadership.

The principles of the two Christian universities in the programs studied as well as the principles guiding NNU's mission aligned with the EI concepts covered in the study and, therefore, indicated valid reasoning for suggesting the inclusion of EI theory and associated concepts as an appropriate addition to the curriculum in the principal preparation program in NNU's course of study. Likewise, the common goal of educational leadership programs as a whole to prepare school leaders for successfully navigating the social and emotional challenges faced by educators in this modern era in education further solidified the justification for generalizing the findings of the study to other universities in the Nazarene university system and to consider the application to a much broader set of educational leaders.

Both the review of the literature and the results of the study revealed a disconcerting gap as well as a justified need for training in social and emotional skills for educational leaders. The study specifically identified training in EI theory and the associated concepts of mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation as an appropriate learning tool for filling this important missing component in the preparation of present-day school leaders. The conceptualization of additional ways to apply this type of training to a wider range of educational leadership professionals opened the door to a host of leadership training possibilities in a variety of formats and to a broad spectrum of educational leaders.

Leadership is in many ways inherent to the role of every educator as they go about their work in schools. Teachers are leaders in their classrooms, charged with communicating clearly, inspiring learning and building relationships with students and parents to create a positive and safe environment for learning. They may also serve as leaders among their peers, carrying important responsibilities and duties outside of their classrooms to contribute to the overall culture and climate of the school. Their ability to operate from an emotionally intelligent mode

with mindfulness, compassion and the self-regulation of emotions is critical to their success. The same can be said for other educators in the school setting who carry leadership responsibilities. Education specialists who fill critical positions, such as counselors, special education directors and assessment coordinators interact daily with students, parents and school staff in a leader capacity to carry out the duties of their work. They too require mastery in social and emotional skills to effectively accomplish their work. The need for emotionally intelligent principals was highlighted in the study, but they are but one set of educational leaders belonging to the larger set of school administrators which would benefit from training in EI theory and associated concepts. This includes assistant principals, academic deans, school-based and central office personnel in a myriad of leadership roles, and the various levels of superintendents. Finally, the important role of leaders who influence the school from outside the arena of the professional educator was considered. Included in this group are school board members, community business leaders, parent and teacher association leaders and legislators.

The professional implications for the application of the findings of this study were broadly conceptualized which resulted in a list of possible interventions which could be applied in order to lessen the gap of knowledge and training found to exist in EI theory and associated concepts for educators. The following were suggested as possible approaches to providing the needed training for the variety of leadership roles identified:

- Include EI theory and associated concepts in all university educator programs, including teacher education, education specialists and all levels of administrator certification. Embed the concepts in current coursework or develop new courses to be added to programs, such as courses studying the psychology of leadership.

- Develop curriculum for the instruction of EI and associated concepts in the form of a handbook or textbook to be used in university educator certification programs, from teacher education to programs in educational leadership.
- Provide professional development in-service training to existing educators and education partners through the use of focused seminars and intensive retreats aimed at changing professional practice through personal transformation. The motive for change would come from understanding EI theory and associated concepts in relation to personal experiences as a leader and applying the new understanding through self-reflection and narrative and with partners, small groups or whole group activities.
- Use problem-based scenarios to analyze and apply EI theory and concepts to typical leader roles and responsibilities in classes, seminars or retreat trainings.
- Provide EI consultation and coaching to individual school leaders and school staff groups, as well as school partners, such as school boards and teachers' associations. Multiple or repeated sessions with groups or individuals was recommended to engender the development and application of EI skills in the school environment.

Recommendations for Further Research

The findings of this study opened the door to further research and a new perspective on the importance of including curriculum in EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs and in-service training for a broad spectrum of school leaders in a variety of leadership roles. In addition to repeating the study with other Nazarene universities to confirm results, recommendations for similar qualitative studies exploring the understanding of, presence,

need for, and perceived hindrances and solutions to including EI theory and associated concepts in principal preparation programs outside the Nazarene university system were made. Not only should the studies explore the use of instruction in EI to preservice principals, but they would be useful if extended to include the use of instruction in EI theory to a variety of individuals preparing for educational leadership roles, from teachers to superintendents. Studies which explore the potential benefits of training in EI theory and associated concepts along with perceived barriers to providing such training for existing educational leaders through in-service training were also recommended. The use of intensive, multi-day retreats as well as shorter seminars, on-site consultation and individual leadership coaching in EI skills were suggested as avenues for furthering the development of existing educational leaders. Such formats could provide useful settings for observation and other data collection opportunities for conducting research on the effects of training in EI for leaders working in the field.

An alternative research design recommended was a quantitative or mixed-methods study exploring the ten themes which emerged from the analysis of the perceived relationship between principal leadership and EI theory. A survey assessing the actual presence and application of the ten themes in schools as expressed by school leaders and their staffs could shed meaningful light on the need for training in EI theory and associated concepts. Questions which would guide this type of research could be built around the themes. For example, a useful question would be one that explores whether or not self- awareness, the most frequently mentioned theme in the study, is identified as a needed skill by existing leaders in the field. Surveys of leaders and followers along with qualitative interviews would provide informative data from the field that could further the findings of this study.

Finally, a similarly designed qualitative study examining the use, need, hindrances and solutions for providing instruction in the concepts of servant leadership in principal preparation programs was suggested as potentially beneficial. A juxtaposed examination of data from studies of EI to those of servant leadership could prove useful in the development of future curriculum built around the human relation aspects of school leadership.

The results of such studies was recognized as potentially bearing considerable influence on the types of training received by all levels of school leaders in the future. While the findings of this phenomenological study revealed the role of emotional intelligence in the Nazarene university system and found a warranted need for specific instruction in this important topic, the larger ramifications for developing and providing instruction in EI through a broader spectrum of educational leadership training opportunities to a variety of education leaders were illuminated. Training in the concepts of EI theory, mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation could provide critical social and emotional skills for school leaders charged with successfully guiding positive change in education. The inclusion of such training for educational leaders could prove to have a lasting and profound impact on their ultimate success as leaders in the educational environment of the twenty-first century.

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Appendix A

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

A. PURPOSE AND BACKGROUND

Andrée M. Scown, in the Department of Graduate Education at Northwest Nazarene University is conducting a research study related to school leader preparation in the Nazarene niversity system. It is a qualitative study of the role of emotional intelligence in educational leadership programs in three Nazarene Universities.

You are being asked to participate in this study because you are member of one of three Nazarene Universities identified to have a program in educational leadership. You are either the Dean of the College of Education or the department chair, or equivalent, of the university's Educational Leadership program and are over the age of 18.

B. PROCEDURES

If you agree to be in the study, the following will occur:

1. You will be asked to sign an Informed Consent Form, thereby volunteering to participate in the study.
2. You will answer a set of interview questions that will be audio-taped and is expected to last 30 minutes in length. A second, follow-up interview will be conducted two weeks later which will take approximately 15 minutes.
3. You will answer a set of demographic questions which will be sent to you via email. It should take approximately 5 minutes to complete.
4. You will be asked to read a debriefing statement at the conclusion of the interview.
5. You will be asked to read and edit (if you deem necessary) a written transcript of the interview.

These procedures will be completed at a location mutually decided upon (or via Adobe Connect) by the participant and principal investigator and will take a total time of about 1 hour.

C. RISKS/DISCOMFORTS

1. In the event any of the questions make you feel uncomfortable, you are free to decline to answer any questions you do not wish to answer or to stop participation at any time.

2. For this study, the researcher is requesting demographic information which will be kept confidential. However, if you are uncomfortable answering any of these questions, you may leave them blank.

3. Confidentiality: Participation in research may involve a loss of privacy; however, your records will be handled as confidentially as possible. No individual identities will be used in any reports or publications that may result from this study. Each participant will be identified with a code rather than by name on all data collection forms.

4. All data from notes, audio tapes, and disks will be kept in a locked file cabinet in the Department and the key to the cabinet will be kept in a separate location. In compliance with the Federal wide Assurance
   Code, data from this study will be kept for three years, after which all data from the study will be destroyed (45 CFR 46.117).

D. BENEFITS

The potential benefits include preservice program revisions that include the use of Emotional Intelligence in the preparation of school principals. Such benefits could extend beyond the preservice program in terms of higher levels of practitioner performance in the K-12 educational setting.

E. PAYMENTS

There will not be any compensation for your volunteering for this study.

F. QUESTIONS

If you have questions or concerns about participation in this study, you should first talk with the investigator. Andrée Scown can be contacted via email at amscown@nnu.edu, via telephone at 208-249-8539 or by writing: P.O. Box 2083, Terrebonne, OR 97760.

Should you feel distressed due to participation in this, you should contact your own health care provider.

G. CONSENT

You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

PARTICIPATION IN RESEARCH IS VOLUNTARY. You are free to decline to be in this study, or to withdraw from it at any point. Your decision as to whether or not to participate in this study will have no influence on your present or future status as a student at Northwest Nazarene University (if applicable).

I give my consent to participate in this study:

Signature of Study Participant	**Date**

I give my consent for the interview and discussion to be audio taped in this study:

Signature of Study Participant	**Date**

I give my consent for direct quotes to be used in this study:

Signature of Study Participant	**Date**
Signature of Person Obtaining Consent	**Date**

THE NORTHWEST NAZARENE UNIVERSITY HUMAN RESEARCH REVIEW COMMITTE HAS REVIEWED THIS PROJECT FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN PARTICIPANTS IN RESEARCH.

Appendix B

Demographic Questionnaire

Please complete the following short questionnaire. Your answers are confidential. The following is a list of demographic questions that would help the researcher in the data analysis phase of the study. You are not required to answer the questions. This is a voluntary questionnaire. If you do not feel comfortable answering one or multiple questions, please leave them blank. Your completion of the survey and returning it is your permission to use the data results for this research project. Thank you.

Participant ID Code: _____

1. My gender is: @ male @ female

2. My age is:

@ 18-25 years	@ 26-30 years	@ 31-35 years
@ 36-40 years	@ 41-45 years	@ 46-50 years
@ 51-55 years	@ 56-60 years	@ 61-65 years
@ 66-70 years	@ 71+ years	

3. I have been working for this university in my current role for _____ years.

4. My current role or title is: _____

5. I **do/do not** (underline one) have experience working as a principal or administrator in the K-12 setting.

   Number of years as K-12 administrator (if any): _____

6. My ethnicity/race is [check **one** or **more** boxes as needed]:
   - @ White
   - @ Black, African American, or Negro
   - @ Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish
   - @ American Indian or Alaska Native
   - @ Chinese
   - @ Asian Indian
   - @ Korean
   - @ Japanese
   - @ Vietnamese
   - @ Native Hawaiian
   - @ Filipino
   - @ Samoan
   - @ Other Asian

Appendix C

FORM 1: INITIAL INTERVIEW

Participant ID Code:_____ Date:_____

Location:_____ Setting:_____

Participant Appearance:_____

Questions:

1. ICE BREAKER: (Introduce self first) Please describe your role in the university.

2. As you know, my study is about pre-service training for principals in relation to emotional intelligence, a theory which has been associated with effective leadership. Let's begin with a general question: How would you describe your educational leadership program's use of ***leadership theory*** in general?

   What are the overall goals of your program and what types of courses are offered which support *leadership theory*? Are there specific leadership theories that are highlighted by your institution within your educational leadership program? (For each question, if specific examples are not given, probe for them).

3. Let's talk about the Theory of Emotional Intelligence. For the purposes of my study I am using Daniel Goleman's definition of emotional intelligence theory. In his theory Goleman identifies four domains and associated competencies consistently displayed by effective organizational leaders. The four domains are:

   1) Self-awareness; 2) Self-management; 3) Social awareness; 4) Relationship management

   How would you describe your background knowledge, if any, and your level of understanding of this theory?

   Describe specific experiences from conferences, workshops, readings, formal courses, a doctoral student etc.... (use as prompt after each question)

4. I am also interested in your perspective of emotional intelligence as it relates to school leadership. How would you describe your perception of the relationship between principal leadership and emotional intelligence, if any?

5. Neuroscientists and researchers in social-emotional learning have identified three brain-based emotional skills which underlie emotional intelligence competence - mindfulness,

compassion and emotion regulation. For the purpose of my study I am using the following definitions for these three skills:

Mindfulness – paying attention and being present in the moment

Compassion – recognition of another person's suffering combined with the desire to ease their suffering

Emotion Regulation –to recognize, understand, label, express and regulate behavior resulting from emotions

6. I would like to explore your understanding of these three skills.
   First, let's talk about the notion of "mindfulness." How would you describe your level of understanding of the concept of mindfulness and its implications for school leaders?

7. I am also interested in your understanding of the concept of "compassion." How would you describe your level of understanding and application of compassion for school principals?

8. Let's consider "emotion regulation." How would you describe your level of understanding and use of emotion regulation by school administrators?

9. How and to what extent, if any, are the concepts and skills associated with emotional intelligence theory, including mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation incorporated into the curriculum in your principal preparation program of study?

10. Let's talk about hindrances to incorporating these concepts into your leadership curriculum. What are the specific roadblocks or challenges which hinder the inclusion of these concepts in your principal preparation program?

11. How about solutions to overcoming these challenges? Do you see a need to strengthen the inclusion of curriculum in emotional intelligence and the associated skills of mindfulness, compassion and emotion regulation in your principal preparation program? If so, what do you see as potential ways to include or strengthen such curriculum in your program?

12. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about any of the four concepts we discussed: emotional intelligence, mindfulness, compassion, and emotion regulation as they relate to school leadership and your university's principal preparation program?

Thank you for participating in the first interview. I look forward to our follow up interview in two weeks to discuss your REFLECTIONS on this discussion.

In preparation for the follow up, *please discuss my study with one or more of your educational leadership faculty for the purpose of affirming or revising your thoughts during this interview.*

Appendix D

Debriefing Statement

(sent via email)

Dear (Participant),

Thank you for participating in my study.

After I have had the opportunity to analyze the data, I will email you the results and ask for your feedback. The purpose of this communication will be to ensure that I have captured our conversations accurately and that I have appropriately portrayed your thoughts.

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Andrée Scown:

By phone: (541) 604-1537

Email: amscown@nnu.edu

By mail: P.O. Box 2083, Terrebonne, Oregon, 97760

Again, thank you for your participation.

Andrée

Appendix E

Member Check

(sent via email)

Hello Dr. _____,

I am sending you the results of my study based on my analysis of the interview data and supporting documents. It is very important to the validity of my study that I ascertain that I have captured the essence of your responses.

Please take a few moments to review the results I have compiled and let me know if they reflect the intentions of your responses. If there is something you would like to omit or change, please let me know.

In order to maintain confidentiality, I have used codes for the participants and universities. All quotes used as examples for the themes which emerged, are identified by these codes. You are Participant __, so paying particular attention to how I translated your thoughts into the results is important.

Thanks kindly,

Andrée

Appendix F

Protection of Humans and Approval

Certificate of Completion

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) Office of Extramural Research certifies that **Andree Scown** successfully completed the NIH Web-based training course "Protecting Human Research Participants".

Date of completion: 10/26/2012

Certification Number: 1036653

Approval from Northwest Nazarene University's Human Research Review Committee to begin conducting research was received on July, 22, 2013. Protocol Number:9062013